

BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE

(IN THE HOUZE)

by
Jason Filardi

revisions by
Leslie Dixon

1/30/02

Hyde Park Entertainment

1
INT. CLOSE ON - A COMPUTER SCREEN - NIGHT (TITLE SEQUENCE)

We SEE, typed onto a computer screen... the letters
A..R..E.....Y..O..U... T..H...E...R...E...? --followed by
the instant messaged response: I'M... H..E..R..E.

The typing speeds up, made faster by overlapping dissolves.
(AND WE WILL PROBABLY ALSO WANT TO FADE IN OUR CHARACTERS'
VOICES READING THESE LITTLE RIPOSTES):

FEMALE MESSAGE

Help me. My client is going to jail.

MALE MESSAGE

Oh no she's not. I think I've got it!

FEMALE MESSAGE

Really?

MALE MESSAGE

Look up Hasson v. Conrad. Similar
circumstantial evidence. The case was
thrown out.

FEMALE MESSAGE

LegalEagle, thank you. You are by far
THE most brilliant mind in this chat
room.

MALE MESSAGE

Thank you, LawyerGirl. I realize we have
certain anonymity here, but do you, by
any chance, have a name?

FEMALE MESSAGE

It's Chastity. Now, don't take that
literally.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STILL ON THE COMPUTER SCREEN - ANOTHER NIGHT,
at a later time. Now it's nothing but personal.

MALE MESSAGE

I like Chaucer, Dickens, Modern Art...

FEMALE MESSAGE

Tuscan food, second hand books stores...

MALE MESSAGE

Went to Harvard...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

2

FEMALE MESSAGE

Hastings!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STILL ON THE COMPUTER SCREENS - ANOTHER NIGHT

Now it's really personal.

FEMALE MESSAGE

I'm 34, 5'6" -- well, that's a lie, only in heels. Peter, what do you look like?

PETER

I'm... a tad older, my hair is... well, it's light, boyishly light...

We tilt up to finally see PETER HARTMAN, late 40's, totally grey. He's wincing, not wanting to lie, but not wanting to type the total truth, either.

INT. PETER'S MID-LIFE CRISIS BMW CONVERTIBLE - DAY

Peter, driving his hot car a bit too fast, squeals into the parking garage of his plush building...

INT. PETER'S OFFICE GARAGE - DAY

..and practically has an accident as he swings, unconsciously, into his space. ANOTHER CAR is already there. An even hotter car -- a Ferrari. He is furious.

INT. PETER'S OFFICE BUILDING - ENTRY CORRIDOR - DAY

As Peter passes, we can see through the glass that separates the office entry from the employee gym. Through the glass he sees TODD GENDLER, doing a killer ab workout. His six-pack flexes and ripples.

INT. EMPLOYEE GYM - DAY

A disgruntled Peter sticks his head in the door.

GENDLER

(to himself, exercising)
98, 99...

PETER

Gendler, is that you in my parking space?

(CONTINUED)

GENDLER

("ingenuous")

Oh! Sorry, man! Meant to move it by now!

He jumps up, all helpful, and scurries off. Peter looks after him, feeling the young shark at his heels.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE PETER'S INNER OFFICE - DAY

Peter strides in, confidence in every step. He stops at his own doorway, noticing that the office across from his is being torn up.

TANYA

Staff meeting in fifteen.

PETER

Like I've ever missed one. --What's going on with Gendler's office--?

He's noticed that the office across from his is under construction. His eyes are glued as he watches workers deliver EXPENSIVE BRASS LIGHT FIXTURES. Peter flicks a glance at his office ceiling, which contains dental office-type fluorescent.

INT. BOARD ROOM - DAY

The founding partners of Tobias & Simons, ED TOBIAS AND DANIEL SIMONS, both in their 50's, preside. Gendler, freshly showered, makes a slightly late entrance. Peter, already sitting, eyes him warily, then turns to his friend, Howie ACKERMAN, 40's.

PETER (CONT'D)

Why the hell are they giving him light fixtures? He's been here a nanosecond!

HOWIE

He signed the Samson Harding account.

PETER

Oh, that's just a rumor.

The senior partners see Gendler, immediately start to CLAP. All the other lawyers start to CLAP too. Some of them actually stand up. Gendler smiles modestly. Peter takes this in, a frozen smile on his face, as Tobias calls the meeting to order.

(CONTINUED)

TOBIAS

Good work, Todd. Okay, on to pressing business. Word has come to us that Mrs. Virginia Arness has experienced some dissatisfaction with her current tax lawyers...

GENDLER

Like, they need to be extradited from Chile.

Laughter. Peter can't stand it.

TOBIAS

Oh, so you've researched.

GENDLER

A 250 million dollar account? Are you kidding? I've been sniffing this one for months.

TOBIAS

And it won't be easy: she gives new meaning to the term conservative; due to her last go-round, she's paranoid, suspicious, and will require constant attention bordering on groveling...

GENDLER

I'm her guy. I'm single, I'll give her nights, weekends--

PETER

Um, Todd, aren't you getting married on Sunday?

GENDLER

That's flexible.

PETER

I admire Todd's dedication, but--

GENDLER

--And Peter, I know your family needs you right now, and this one's a 24/7, I'd be happy to give you a little breather.

Like, position myself to take your job.

TOBIAS

I see no reason not to let Gendler run with it.

(CONTINUED)

Wait! Peter can't believe this is all being yanked away from him. But he behaves with perfect cool. He sighs.

PETER

The inexhaustible energy of youth. That is an asset.

Gendler smiles.

PETER (cont'd)

...at the company softball game, but with a 75-year-old arch-conservative woman?

The room looks perplexed. Peter turns to Gendler.

PETER (cont'd)

Name a tune by Cole Porter.

GENDLER

What does that--?

PETER

Is that chair faux Chippendale or Stickley?

Gendler is confused.

PETER (cont'd)

Why did she hate FDR?

GENDLER

Formal dining rooms?

PETER

You see? How will you talk to her, Todd? I understand this woman: McCarthy will have been Ghandi to her, Nixon misunderstood, you'll have to say, yes, why doesn't anyone wear hats or gloves anymore?! Fluoridated water has made us a bunch of lefties! That Audrey Hepburn was a tart!

Peter gives him a condescending smile.

PETER (CONT'D)

Someone with a little seasoning, someone whose parents weren't listening to the Bee-Gees, might at least have a shot.

They're all staring at him. But the older partners are staring... with respect. They look at Gendler dubiously.

(CONTINUED)

TOBIAS

Todd, let's re-think this for a minute.

Gendler shoots Peter daggers.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE PETER'S OFFICE

Peter strides back, triumphant, cool, bounce in his step. He goes into his office, closes the door...

INT. PETER'S OFFICE - DAY

Peter is BREATHING FURIOUSLY INTO A PAPER BAG. He is a wreck. The door opens. His friend, Howie, stands there, staring at him.

HOWIE

Are you okay?

PETER

Fine.

Peter tosses away the bag as if it's nothing.

PETER (CONT'D)

Just a yoga exercise.

HOWIE

They hyperventilate now?

PETER

I was breathing. That's what yoga people do, we breathe a lot.

HOWIE

I'm your friend, you can tell me.
Are you having a heart attack?

PETER

No!

HOWIE

Stroke? Seizure? Buyer's remorse?

PETER

May I help you with something, Howie?

HOWIE

Come on. I came to compliment you for turning it around.

PETER

Turning what around?

(CONTINUED)

We may notice that Peter doesn't like to admit vulnerabilities. He's back to acting "cool."

HOWIE
You snaked Gendler!

PETER
Please. Gendler doesn't threaten me.

HOWIE
Oh. I thought he might. Ever since they started re-doing his office...

PETER
Oh, mine's just taking longer... I'm having a complete structural overhaul, we've got two architects bidding--

HOWIE
Oh. Then, nothing to worry about.

PETER
Nothing. And I'm meeting Mrs. Arness in fifteen minutes, so if you don't--

Howie is looking at Peter's computer.

HOWIE
Somebody's messaging you.

CLOSE ON - PETER'S COMPUTER

It reads: Peter. Are you there?

HOWIE (CONT'D)
Who's "Chastity"?

PETER
Nobody.

He tries to stand in front of the screen, but Howie manages to read: "I'm really excited we're finally going to meet tonight." Peter quickly pushes a button, makes the message box disappear.

HOWIE
Ooh...! Did someone made a blind internet date?!

PETER
Only... technically.

(CONTINUED)

HOWIE

Did you find her on MuskyHotMamas.com?
That's my favorite site. Some of those
babes have thighs that could just smother
you--

PETER

This is more about how you spend your
evenings than I want to know. --And this
was not a meat market! It was a legal
chat room, thank you, and she's a classy,
civilized person--

HOWIE

So when do you nail her?

PETER

Tonight. --I hope. She's coming to my
house at seven.

Howie focuses on the photo that is left on the screen.

THE PICTURE - CLOSE

A stunning, classy-looking BLONDE WOMAN, MID-30'S, is
striding down the court house steps, briefcase in hand.

HOWIE

Uh-huh. Oh-kay.

PETER

What. You don't think she's attractive?

HOWIE

(shrugging, doesn't get it)
I don't know. She's just so young and
thin and blonde...

PETER

You're clinically insane.

HOWIE

Well, if that's your type...anyway. Good
for you, you need someone, you're not
over Kate.

PETER

(realizing, to his horror)
KATE!!!

He buzzes his intercom.

(CONTINUED)

PETER (cont'd)
Get my ex wife on the phone.

TANYA'S VOICE
(replying from intercom)
Get her yourself.

He's not looking forward to it.

INT. KATE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

KATE, Peter's attractive ex-wife, is on the phone with him.

KATE
Oh, what, what is it now, ooh, something
really big came up, you're going to
settle the Howard Hughes estate!

We will CROSS-CUT between her and:

INT. PETER'S OFFICE - CORRIDOR

Peter is walking quickly, stuffing papers in his briefcase,
talking on his cell phone.

PETER
I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Did I mention I'm
sorry?

KATE
Of all the weeks you could have picked to
cancel--

PETER
Could I just say that the pressure on me
right now--

KATE
Not that you care, but I was going out of
town.

PETER
You were?

KATE
Yes, since you were taking the kids for
the week, I just thought I'd take a trip--

PETER
Alone?

KATE
What does it matter, I'm not going now!

(CONTINUED)

PETER

If you think that I enjoy distressing
you, or my own children--

KATE

Then why do you chronically do it,
Peter?!!!

She hangs up on him. Looks at her children: SARAH, 15, a
lovely, wholesome girl, and GEORGEY, 8, who are standing
there, looking at her. Kate hates to tell them.

KATE (CONT'D)

He's not taking you to Hawaii.

SARAH

(used to this)

Mom. I never packed.

INT. HUNTINGTON HOTEL LOUNGE - LATE AFTERNOON

MRS. ARNESS, sour, stern, and pickled in formality, sits at a
table, her obese little Pomeranian at her feet. Every aspect
of her dress bespeaks rigidly conservative wealth. Peter
sits opposite her. She appraises him shrewdly.

MRS. ARNESS

I'm glad they didn't send a child. I
told them I specifically wanted someone
my own age.

Peter chews his lip to keep from choking -- this old bat
looks 1,000 if she looks a day! That she could even consider
them contemporaries--! The waiter appears.

PETER

What would you like to drink?

MRS. ARNESS

(to the waiter)

Spring water. Room temperature. No
lemons or citrus of any sort.

PETER

Water as well.

But he longingly eyes a LARGE GLASS OF WINE going past on
another waiter's tray -- clearly he'd like some about now.
He wrenches his attention back to her.

MRS. ARNESS

So you don't drink, either?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PETER

It should be illegal.

He sneaks a glance at HIS WATCH. It reads 6:41. He launches in, quickly.

PETER (CONT'D)

Now, I know all about your unfortunate escapade--

MRS. ARNESS

I don't have 'escapades' of any sort.

PETER

(searching for a word)

--Well, you certainly wouldn't have fiascoes either, would you --? Um, your... unfortunate occurrence with your prior representation, and--

MRS. ARNESS

The man was a thieving criminal. The one before merely frivolous. Always making "quips." I dislike humor in any form. Particularly used as a lubricant in business transactions.

PETER

Yes, transactional lubricants are...

(No! Don't go there!)

...ehhhh.... ill-advised. I am not capable of humor. I draw the line at wry.

Another glance at his watch. 6:46!

MRS. ARNESS

First, Mr. Hartman, I must be satisfied that your character is sterling.

PETER

Which is why our firm fully finances background checks of its employees. The report will be in your hands tomorrow.

MRS. ARNESS

In the meantime, then, you may show me your proposal...

He glances at his watch. Shit!!!

(CONTINUED)

PETER

Proposal...? I was just informed of your interest an hour ago, I don't--

MRS. ARNESS

It's not ready?

PETER

(smoothly)

Being printed out and bound as we speak. So if, with your indulgence, we can continue this meeting at my club tomorrow, I should have an entire five year tax plan laid out for your perusal.

She thinks it over.

MRS. ARNESS

I'm a very busy woman...

A TUXEDOED MANAGER appears at their table.

MANAGER

I'm sorry, but there are no dogs allowed in the lounge.

Peter jumps in.

PETER

Excuse me, I am Mrs. Arness' lawyer, there are no signs prohibiting dogs, therefore that policy is unenforcable, Berman v. Dixon, 1981, so I suggest you tend to the needs of your guests and bring us a water dish for Muffy here.

With a frozen smile, the Manager bows his head and goes. Mrs. Arness looks at Peter.

MRS. ARNESS

What time tomorrow?

Peter heaves a sigh of relief. Last look at his watch. 6:54!!

EXT. PETER'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Peter's car SQUEALS into the driveway of his perfect, pristine Colonial house. Every leaf of every shrub is even, and there are sculptural topiary arrangements.

(CONTINUED)

At the squeal of his tires, a curtain parts on a window next door, a face looks out. We will soon meet his extremely nosy neighbor, MRS. Kline.

MRS. KLINE, 60, appears, the model of Republican perfection, pearls and all.

MRS. KLINE

Hello, Mr. Hartman!

Peter, for reasons that will become apparent, sucks up to Mrs. Kline.

PETER

Mrs. Kline, always a pleasure.

MRS. KLINE

And when am I going to get to babysit for your charming little Georgey?

PETER

Oh. Um. Soon. He has so much fun at your house.

Her house is actually covered with gates, bars, security cameras and motion detectors. It looks like no human could ever have fun there. She drops her voice, confidential:

MRS. KLINE

Um... those latin people who were skulking around today...?

PETER

Oh, they were looking at the Tudor.

MRS. KLINE

Casing it--?

PETER

Um, no, to buy it.

MRS. KLINE

Oh, please. If they're in this block and not carrying a leaf blower--

PETER

(as politely as he can muster)
Mrs. Kline, I can't wait to discuss that with you in detail, I so wish I wasn't expecting someone--

Peter looks at his watch. It reads 6:59. He rushes back in.

INT. PETER'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON (FRANTIC MUSIC UNDER)

STEADICAM SHOTS as Peter races through rooms, straightening out what is already perfect neatness and sterility. JUMP CUTS as Peter appears before a mirror, trying five different looks. He finally ends up back where he started. Misc. shots, flossing, gelling, 409 being sprayed on the bottom of his shoes, a sponge scrubbing.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Peter uncorks a bottle of wine. He sets out two crystal glasses, lights some candles.

INT. PETER'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Peter puts Michael Bolton on the CD player. He claps, dimming the lights. He fires up more candles.

Peter strikes some macho poses by the mantel, all of which look anything but macho.

Suddenly we hear the SOUND of high heels click-clacking up the walkway. The doorbell!!!

Peter grabs a bouquet of flowers, starts to race for the door, then stops himself, breathes and just... saunters. He's going to be cool about this. Suave. It's just opening a door. That's all. Opening a door to find...

PETER

Good eve--

A LARGE BLACK WOMAN! Nappy dreadlocks, tattoos and long red fingernails. The woman smiles, showing off one GOLD FRONT TOOTH.

BLACK WOMAN

'Sup, Cuz? Are those for me?

The Black Woman reaches for the flowers. Peter pulls away.

PETER

Oh. You want the Watsons, 510, not 501.
They're the ones interviewing for a maid.

Peter tries to shut the door. The woman stops it.

BLACK WOMAN

Hold up, Bro. This is the Hartman crib,
right?

(CONTINUED)

PETER

Yes. Are you with the postal ser-

Before Peter can move, the Black Woman wraps him in a huge bear hug. Peter gasps for breath.

BLACK WOMAN

Damn good to finally connect.

The Black Woman puts Peter down and strolls in.

PETER

What do you mean, "finally connect?"

Chastity looks around.

CHASTITY

This is how you live? Damn, you pimpin' large.

PETER

Hey, you can't just walk in here! I'm expecting someone.

BLACK WOMAN

And here I am. Chocolate covered and yummy, honey. It's me, Fool, Chastity in the house!

Peter's jaw goes slack. His eyes widen.

PETER

You can't be.

CHASTITY

Why not?

PETER

You're... you're not a blonde!

CHASTITY

You must be a sweet lawyer, Pete, the way you see into people 'n shit.

PETER

How do you know I'm a... no, no, no, this can't be! The Chastity I know is--

CHASTITY

A skinny white ho?

(CONTINUED)

PETER

Exactly.

CHASTITY

That's your fault, bro, you thinkin' that.
You didn't take a good look at that
picture!

Peter marches to the hall table, brandishes the picture.

PETER

A blind man with no sense of smell could
see that this picture is not you!

CHASTITY

That's me! You just gotta look close.
Real close.

He looks at her like she's insane.

INT. PETER'S OFFICE - ON HIS COMPUTER - NIGHT

Click! Click! Click! We see the PHOTO of the blonde being
enlarged. And now Peter can see the detail... behind the
striking blonde at the courthouse is a POLICE CAR, and being
CUFFED, in the background, is CHASTITY.

CHASTITY

Sorry you got messed up. Don't got a
lotta photo opportunity where I been, you
know what I'm sayin'?

PETER

I don't have a clue what you're saying --
ever!

(beat, it registers)

"Where you been?" What does that mean,
"where you been?"

She can see through the door to PETER'S BEDROOM, which has
lit candles by the bed, and the bed turned down.

CHASTITY

Look at that! All romantic and shit!
Somebody was plannin' on gettin' some
tonight!

PETER

Exactly where have you been?

(CONTINUED)

CHASTITY
(ignoring this)
I got a rumble in the jungle. We having
dinner or what?

She starts off down the stairs. Peter follows, agonized.

PETER
I asked you a question!

INT. PETER'S HOUSE - STAIRS

Peter follows her, gets in front of her, stopping her.

PETER
Exactly where have you been?!

CHASTITY
Rolex.

PETER
Rolex?

CHASTITY
That's what I said.

PETER
You stole my Rolex?!

CHASTITY
No, man -- Rolex. I did time. But I
didn't do the crime.

PETER
YOU'RE A CONVICT?

CHASTITY
Don't you be usin' that word on me!

PETER
What should I use?! "Morally
challenged?!"

CHASTITY
Ex-con! And I didn't do it!
(beat, sighs)
Okay. I was just released from the
Correctional Facility for Women...

PETER
And... you came here... directly from the
big house...?!

(CONTINUED)

To his house? She continues into--

INT. PETER'S KITCHEN (TIME CUT)

Chastity opens the refrigerator, grabs some cold cuts, as Peter enters, agonizing behind her.

PETER

You were flirting with me from a prison computer? How do they let you people have access?!

CHASTITY

Clean ten toilets, get ten minutes.

PETER

And how... how did you even... manage the language... I...

CHASTITY

(munching)

Spell check.

PETER

(gritting his teeth)

Spell check.

CHASTITY

Yeah, and there's this "Punctuate" command, you got that one?

PETER

No. I don't "got" that one.

CHASTITY

(chuckles)

How 'bout that? Prison computer got more shit than yours.

PETER

I DON'T WANT TO HEAR ABOUT THE PRISON COMPUTER! How DARE you misrepresent yourself to a respectable citizen--!

CHASTITY

Hey, man, you misrepresented your cream of wheat ass! Said you was a criminal lawyer and shit. You're just some pokey-ass tax lawyer!

PETER

At least I studied to be a criminal lawyer--

(CONTINUED)

CHASTITY

Yeah. That's why I'm here.

PETER

Oh, do tell!

CHASTITY

I want to reopen my case.

PETER

What did you do? Smoke some homies on a drive-by?

CHASTITY

"Smoke." 'Homies." Ooh, you a regular gangsta. Nah, I was in for armed robbery. But I didn't--

PETER

You know what? I can't. I can't even have this conversation, I can't be seen around this element--

CHASTITY

I'm a element?! Now just you hold on--

PETER

You have to go.
(even more firmly)
YOU. HAVE. TO. GO.

He flings open the back door, yanks her to her feet, and pushes her out. He is about to slam the door.

CHASTITY

Okay, wait up, wait up!! Can I just say something please?

He hovers, itching to close the door.

CHASTITY (CONT'D)

Look. There's nobody respectable I can go to.

PETER

I can't imagine why.

CHASTITY

I did not do this crime. But now I got this stain all over my life. I can't vote--

(CONTINUED)

PETER

Did you ever?

CHASTITY

--Can't work, got to put I'm an ex-con on everything I ever sign -- so nobody'll hire me, I got to put this thing right. Gotta clean it up. I know I messed wit' you... but I did like you. You're smart. You were kind to me, gave me free advice and shit...

PETER

I thought I was going to get a Magna cum laude goddess!

CHASTITY

So help out the home girl instead.

She seems quite sincere. They exchange a look. He sighs.

PETER

All right. I'll help.

CHASTITY

You will? Really?

He nods.

PETER

First, what we do is--

SLAM! Peter shuts the door, quickly triple locks it.

INT. PETER'S HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS SHOT

He goes up the stairs, into his bedroom. Starts to take off his pants... when suddenly he HEARS...

CHASTITY (O.S.)

IT'S YOUR BABY, PETER! DON'T DENY IT!
HE GOT THE SAME MOLE ON HIS ASS!!!

Peter freezes. Looks out the window.

EXT. PETER'S FRONT PORCH - DAY

Chastity is pounding on the front door!!

CHASTITY

Little Kareem is yours, Peter! DNA test told on you, boy!

(CONTINUED)

To his horror, Peter sees neighbor's lights turning on.

INT. PETER'S FRONT HALL - DAY

Peter bolts down the stairs two at a time, trips, must catch the banister, and still slides the last three stairs down on his ass before righting himself.

CHASTITY (O.S.)

He's our little chocolate/vanilla swirl!
Our love child from that magical night in
the crack house!

Peter flings open the door.

EXT. PETER'S FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Peter rushes out and TACKLES CHASTITY ON THE LAWN!!

PETER

Shut up! This isn't the projects!

He sees MRS. Kline (Mrs. Arness' close personal friend) START TO OPEN HER DOOR. He yanks Chastity inside and slams the door just as Mrs. Kline appears in rollers, looking acutely around.

INT. PETER'S FRONT HALL - NIGHT

Chastity is smirking as she waltzes back in.

PETER

All right. Stay here. Just be quiet!

He storms into the other room, picks up the phone. Chastity enters, pulling sheets of paper from her bag.

PETER (CONT'D)

-- Yes, I'd like to report--
(focusing on papers)
What's that?

CHASTITY

Our e-mails. Think anybody'd wanna read
a story about this fancy-ass lawyer
lookin' for some poon in the federal pen?
(chuckling to herself)
"Poon in the pen," I like that--

PETER

(beat, into phone)
...Hi, is this UPS? --Oh, I'm sorry,
wrong number.

(CONTINUED)

He hangs up, stares at the papers.

CHASTITY

Take 'em. I got other copies. How much you think the L.A. Times pay for a story like that?

Peter sighs, defeated.

INT. PETER'S SPARE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Chastity walks in, smirking.

PETER

It's only for tonight. Understand?

Chastity looks around, approving of the plush accommodation. She throws back the covers, admiring the satiny sheets. Sits on the bed, testing its springiness.

CHASTITY

A'ight. Now don't be gettin' any ideas about bumrushing the booty. You missed your chance with this fine Sista.

PETER

Then leave me to my lifetime of regret.

He turns, sour, and goes.

INT. PETER'S HALLWAY - MORNING

A noticeably tired Peter steps from his room showered and suited. The rumble of HEAVY SNORING echoes from within the spare room.

Peter takes a chair away from the doorknob, opens the door and enters.

INT. PETER'S SPARE BEDROOM - MORNING

Chastity lies on her back, one leg on the ground, SNORING.

PETER

Chastity. Chastity.

Chastity doesn't move. Peter inches closer.

PETER (CONT'D)

Come on, Chastity. Time to go. You're not fooling me.

(CONTINUED)

Peter reaches out to shake Chastity when--

WHAM! Chastity's grounded foot rocks Peter's nuts. Peter doubles over. POW. A right hook drops Peter.

Chastity leaps up onto the bed, throwing wild haymakers.

CHASTITY

Who's there? Who else wants some? These teeth ain't for stealin', Baby!

Chastity focuses on Peter, writhing on the ground. Leaps off the bed and helps him up.

CHASTITY (CONT'D)

Sorry, Dawg. You got to know better than to sneak up on an ex-con like that.

PETER

Don't touch me.

(smiling a phony, warm smile)

Get up. I have something to show you.

EXT. PETER'S BACK YARD - DAY

Peter leads Chastity, now dressed, to the BBQ, where remnants of papers are smoldering.

PETER

(smirking)

There's your evidence. And I found the second set in the lining of your coat. AND... I deleted everything off my computer. You've never met me... I've never met you...

Chastity, angry, turns back to the house.

PETER (CONT'D)

Don't even try. You're locked out. I'm going to pick up my kids. As in, innocent underage persons who will never know you were here!

(shooing her)

On your way, go on...

CHASTITY

What about my stuff!

Peter's already walking down the driveway.

PETER

It's all on the front porch.

(CONTINUED)

He gives a little back-of-hand wave as he gets in his car.
He drives off.

Chastity's hard stare immediately evaporates. Humming to herself merrily, she pulls a nail file from her pocket. She digs it in the door lock... and POP. The door opens.

EXT. KATE'S HOUSE - DAY

Peter's car pulls up. He gets out. He sees his son, Georgey, trying ineptly to make a basket.

PETER

Hey, guy, let me show you that.

Georgey smiles, happy to see his Dad. Peter bounces the ball exactly twice. Then his cell phone rings.

From the look on Georgey's face, this has happened a lot. And of course, Peter answers it.

PETER (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Yes -- Mrs. Arness -- hello!

CROSS CUT WITH:

INT. MRS. ARNESS' PALATIAL LIVING ROOM - DAY

We see Mrs. Arness, a black servant in the background, in her huge mansion, with ancestral portraits on the walls.

MRS. ARNESS

I'm cancelling tomorrow. I will be meeting with other firms.

PETER

Why?!

MRS. ARNESS

A five year plan--?! Under what possible circumstances can you pretend to predict the whims of the IRS five years in advance?!

(CONTINUED)

PETER

With most firms, that would require a Ouija Board, but I happen to be very close to Senator Joe Fontaine, who as you know heads the tax committee and is delightfully indiscreet... to his friends...

Georgey looks morose. He let the ball drop. It bounces away. He doesn't go after it.

MRS. ARNESS

I see.

She looks grudgingly impressed.

MRS. ARNESS (cont'd)

Then I'll see you at the club.

Peter hangs up, muttering:

PETER

If it walks and talks she's suspicious of it. Okay, Georgey, let's--!

But he has addressed this last remark to no one. Because Georgey is gone.

INT. KATE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Kate is giving last-minute instructions to her sister, ASHLEY, who, while younger and more beautiful, also got the Bitch gene. Unlike Kate, she is selfish, vain, and snobbish. But right now, she's all Kate's got. Kate, suitcase beside her, is hurriedly giving instructions while the Sarah watches.

KATE

The spare key's under the awning...
...Sarah, will you help Georgey with his reading?

ASHLEY

What's the matter with him?

KATE

Nothing, he's just having a struggle, he's almost there...

ASHLEY

I was reading at two.

(CONTINUED)

KATE

Well, don't mention that, he's very sensitive. And it doesn't help that Sarah has a 4.0.

Ashley eyes Sarah, dubious. Sarah, wholesome and efficient, smiles.

SARAH

I'll show you where everything is, Aunt Ashley.

ASHLEY

I don't have to cook, do I?

KATE

Please. I know you. Here are eleven takeout numbers. Thank you, THANK YOU, I know this isn't your thing, but since Peter flaked...

PETER (O.S.)

Flaked? I'm here!

Kate jumps out of her skin. He's in the room with them.

KATE

I told you to give that key back!

PETER

I'm sorry; I am giving it back. And I didn't flake! I didn't say I wouldn't take them for the week. I just said I couldn't take them to Hawaii...

ASHLEY

Of course not. When have you devoted one millisecond of your time to them?

PETER

I don't notice you popping them out like biscuits!

ASHLEY

Forgive me if I'm waiting for an acceptable man.

(pointedly, to Kate)

Not the first jerk I meet in college!

PETER

"Acceptable," as in some greasy, rich missing link who needs to shave his forehead--?!

(CONTINUED)

KATE

All right, isn't this all beside the point now?! We're divorced!

(to Ashley)

And we're trying to be friends.

PETER

I'm trying. I'm here, aren't I?

KATE

(grateful)

Yes. Thank you.

ASHLEY

I'm off the hook?!

PETER

(to Kate)

Go on your vacation. Have a great ti--

The DOORBELL rings. Sarah opens the door. A NICE-LOOKING MAN is standing there with a suitcase.

PETER (CONT'D)

(acid)

The bellman is here.

KATE

Um, Peter, this is Glen...

Glen is very friendly. And quite cute, if a little new-agey. He sticks out his hand. Peter reluctantly shakes. He knew eventually that he would have to face this moment. But he's still taken aback. Glen kisses Kate. Peter withers.

EXT. KATE'S HOUSE - DAY

Peter, Sarah and Georgey are in Peter's car. Glen is already in his car, luggage on top, and Kate is about to get in...

Peter turns the key, then, seized by an impulse, turns it off. Gets out and approaches Kate, taking her aside.

PETER

How old is he?

KATE

Younger.

PETER

What does he do?

(CONTINUED)

KATE
Golf instructor.

PETER
How do you know that?

KATE
What?

Peter, still infused with his shock and disappointment over Chastity, is coming off rather erratically.

PETER
You think you know about somebody? Uh-uh. Next thing you know you wake up in an alley missing a kidney! He could be constructing this whole "golf identity" out of thin air!

KATE
He caddied for you when he was 12.

PETER
Oh.
(beat)
Well. Have fun on your statutory weekend!

KATE
This really bothers you, doesn't it?
(not without pity)
You want to talk about it?

He opens his mouth -- a flicker of regret in his eyes. Peter's cell phone rings. His eye flicks to the phone. Flicks back to her. He's horribly torn. She laughs, gets in the car. The door slams.

KATE (CONT'D)
Some things never change.

Hating himself, Peter reaches for the phone.

INT. PETER'S CAR - DRIVING - DAY

Georgey's in the back; Peter drives, Sarah next to him.

PETER
So. I'm sorry about Hawaii. What's new?
Sarah and Georgey just eye the car phone.

(CONTINUED)

PETER (CONT'D)

It's off. Tell me. You can talk to me.

SARAH

Mom got really mad at me.

PETER

Really?

SARAH

She says I cram too hard. I'm going to ruin my eyes.

PETER

What, she's going to punish you for studying too much?

SARAH

She keeps charging in at two in the morning. Tells me to turn off my light! I have tests. I need to study!

PETER

I, of all people, understand.

SARAH

You would never interrupt me.

PETER

Never. So, Georgey, look what I got you!

Peter passes a BOOK to the back seat. Georgey groans.

PETER (CONT'D)

Show me how the reading's coming.

Georgey, miserable, opens the book on his lap. Tries to read:

GEORGEY

The... b... b...

SARAH

Bear...

GEORGEY

Bear... s...wawk...

They've stopped at a light. Peter looks over his shoulder at Georgey's book.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

I believe that's "walk." The L is silent.

Georgey still struggles.

PETER (CONT'D)

Walked...through the woods...c'mon..

Georgey pushes the book away.

GEORGEY

It's too hard!

PETER

Keep trying. You'll get to the good part. Those bears'll have a rocking picnic!

GEORGEY

I hate this!

PETER

Georgey--

GEORGEY

This is for babies! I'm eight! I'm the last one in my class who can't do it! I'm never gonna get it!

Georgey throws the book out the window. Starts to cry.

PETER

I'll get you a tutor, it'll be okay, you'll--

PETER'S POV

A bunch of LOW-RIDERS crowd his driveway. Two are halfway up on his lawn.

BACK TO:

EXT. PETER'S DRIVEWAY

Confused, Peter leaps from his car. Wild CHEERING resounds from inside the garage.

GEORGEY

What's going on, Dad?

(CONTINUED)

PETER

You two go in the house. I'll be right there. Go on.

Georgey and Sarah head for the house. Peter pushes the remote door opener. The garage door rises to reveal a GANG of UNDESIRABLES packing the garage. No...! Can they really be having a COCK FIGHT?!

Peter looks, horrified, over his shoulder. The lace at Mrs. Kline's window begins to move...! He leaps inside, manually pulling the door shut. By the time Mrs. Kline's face is revealed, peering, the garage looks normal, door closed, although the cars are still there.

INT. GARAGE - DAY

Peter squeezes his way towards the action. Chastity hoots and waves money around. Peter pushes his way over to her.

PETER

What the hell is going on here!?

CHASTITY

I hit my peoples up. You're just in time to drop off a bet.

PETER

I told you to leave! Where do you think you are, the prison yard?!

CHASTITY

Loosen your panties, Grandmama. You lock me out, no money, no place to go...? I'm all about makin' the cheddar. --Get that beak peekin' baby!!!

PETER

My boss' sister lives next door--!

CHASTITY

We inside, ain't we--?

EXT. PETER'S GARAGE - DAY

Mrs. Kline stares out her window as she hears UNSAVORY YELLS coming from Peter's garage.

INT. GARAGE - DAY

Peter, agonized, watches the cocks circle each other. The fight hasn't started yet... but it's getting close.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

What's the matter with you people?! This sport would have repelled the ROMANS! I won't allow it!

Peter jumps into the ring. Shoos the two birds away from each other.

Jeers and threats ring out. Unbeknownst to Peter, the cocks begin to CIRCLE HIM.

PETER (CONT'D)

Now I want all you heathens to listen to--

Suddenly the cocks ATTACK, pecking at his feet!

PETER (cont'd)

Owww! Owowowowow!

He has to hop on his uninjured foot, can't keep his balance, trips, and goes down!

The crowd goes wild.

Sarah and Georgey slide in the back door of the garage, watching in awe as...

PETER

is writhing on the ground, face down. One rooster stands on his shoulders, pecking at his neck. The other on his back, pecking at his butt. Jeers and screams of delight.

Chastity jumps into the ring.

CHASTITY

Hold on there, chicken feed--

With a powerful WRENCH, she yanks Peter to his feet. There is a rooster clamped to his butt. When he turns, it swings.

CHASTITY (cont'd)

Okay, that's it! Everybody back to Crenshaw!

Groans of disappointment.

EXT. PETER'S HOUSE - DAY

The low riders are all driving away. Angry, muttering people of various colors are leaving.

(CONTINUED)

Peter stands, glowering, in his doorway, his face covered with scratches, his clothes torn. He sees--

MRS. KLINE

standing on her front porch. Staring. He quickly approaches her. He musters every bit of urbane confidence he can:

PETER

Never. Ever. Allow a movie company to use your home.

MRS. KLINE

Oh. Then those people were...

PETER

No, not real lowlifes, they were actors. --Who are just as bad, by the way, whining, long distance phone calls, don't get me started!

MRS. KLINE

But why would you ever...?

PETER

Public service spot. I thought I could make a difference.

MRS. KLINE

A spot... for what...?

PETER

(really reaching)

Chicken abuse. It's a thing now, it's on the news... there are cults, you don't even want to know. Look at my lawn! I've blighted the neighborhood, Mrs. Kline. That's what I get for trying to be a good citizen.

MRS. KLINE

Of course these things always backfire. That's why God made electric gates.

PETER

Good idea! I'm going to get some priced right now--!

He makes his escape, disappearing into his house...

INT. PETER'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

...to find CHASTITY with Georgey and Sarah.

(CONTINUED)

PETER
WHAT are you still doing here--?

SARAH
What was all that Dad?

GEORGEY
(re Chastity)
Dad, who is this? -

PETER
This is no one--

CHASTITY
(ignoring this, focusing on
Georgey)
Wassup, crumb snatcher? You're cute as a
puppy. I'm Chastity. Wass your name?

GEORGEY
I'm Geor--

Peter covers Georgey's mouth.

PETER
No introductions! Can't meet a
nonexistent person...

He firmly ushers Chastity to the door.

PETER (cont'd)
...a rumor, a vapor, a figment!!!

The kids blink at him.

EXT. COUNTRY CLUB - POOL AREA - DAY

Peter walks along with Sarah and Georgey, who are in bathing
suits.

SARAH
Why'd you kick her out?

GEORGEY
You were kind of mean, Dad.

PETER
I gave her bus fare. And a Coke!
Please!
(to Sarah)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PETER (cont'd)

You didn't tell her where we were going,
did you?

(off Sarah's blank look)

...DID YOU?!

SARAH

(oops, I did)

Of course not, Dad.

They have reached the pool area.

PETER

Now, you guys just order some hot dogs,
splash and frolic, I'll have a quick
lunch with Mrs. Arness, and I'll be right
back.

He goes. Sarah sighs.

SARAH

In the next millennium.

EXT. COUNTRY CLUB - OUTDOOR LUNCH AREA - DAY

Peter is shown to an elegantly-laid table. Howie rushes up,
breathless, a LEATHER-BOUND 80 PAGE REPORT in his arms.

HOWIE

I was up all night proofing... this is
brilliant... she'll go with it...

Peter, fussing to make the table more perfect, takes a
napkin, rubs a spot off a fork. Howie produces another file.

HOWIE (CONT'D)

And you've got the cleaneast background
check I've ever seen! How did you go to
Berkeley without getting arrested?

Peter rips out that page, tosses it.

PETER

Sh! Just the fact that I set foot in the
city limits might be too much for her.

HOWIE

Good thing she didn't check me out. I
don't even want to think...
solicitation... lewd act in a car...
solicitation... more solicitation...

(CONTINUED)

PETER

I'm getting a very bleak picture of your
love life. --Okay? Is this perfect?
Not enough flowers? Too many?

He's a bundle of nervous energy, moving the flowers around.
He suddenly notices--

ACROSS THE LAWN

Coming towards him, with a determined stride, is CHASTITY!
She's changed her clothes and is conveniently wearing his
sweater!

PETER

Oh no no no...

HOWIE

What.

PETER

It's that *rude shock* I told you about!

Lucky looks. And sees something quite different from what
Peter sees.

SLO-MO SHOT OF CHASTITY,

dreadlocks bouncing, skin shining...

HOWIE

smiles to himself. This, to him, is a vision of loveliness.

HOWIE

That's Chastity?

PETER

Unbelievable, isn't it?

HOWIE

You didn't tell me she was such a hottie!

Peter shoots him a look -- Howie's taste in women is
evidently quite different from Peter's.

PETER

(panicked, running over his
options)

Okay, police -- won't get here fast
enough -- security --

(eyes a guard)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

31

PETER (cont'd)

She could probably take him... bribes!
Money! Okay...

Chastity has arrived. Peter launches right in.

PETER (CONT'D)

Thirty bucks. And more where that came
from if you just. Leave. Now.

CHASTITY

Uh-uh, boyfriend, we got business.

HOWIE

Boyfriend?

PETER

Shut up, Howie, it's street for--

CHASTITY

It's street for you better listen your
sorry ass up, before I turn you into a
egg white omelet!

PETER

Enough of your ridiculous cultural
idioms!

CHASTITY

You calling my culture an idiot?!

PETER

Listen to me! My job is hanging by a
thread! I have a client coming in--

HOWIE

And I'd be delighted to show you around,
Chastity...!

He starts to lead her off. There is a funny snapping sound.
They look up and see--

ASHLEY

Kate's sister, sitting with a rich-looking MALE FRIEND. She
is snapping her fingers -- at Chastity! Chastity turns and
shoots her a look.

ASHLEY

Miss! Another rum punch, please.

Chastity smiles dangerously.

CHASTITY

I'll give you a rum punch, sugah--!

(CONTINUED)

She starts for Ashley. Peter and Howie grab her arms.

PETER

(hissing)

DON'T.

(to Ashley, weak smile)

Ashley, she doesn't work here. I..
actually... know her.

Ashley looks incredulous.

ASHLEY

Why?

Chastity starts for her again, fist clenched. Peter holds her back, hissing in her ear.

PETER

It's my ex-wife's sister, or believe me,
I would've killed her myself years ago,
now, please, please...

And now Peter sees--

ACROSS THE LAWN

Mrs. Arness' driver opening the door of her Silver Shadow.
Mrs. Arness gets out, begins her walk across the lawn, her
waddling dog at her heels.

Chastity smirks.

CHASTITY

So that's Mrs. Iron-Ass.

PETER

Mrs. Arness! And you have to go--!

CHASTITY

Ol' Iron-Ass be lookin' mean!

PETER

PLEASE!!

HOWIE

(trying to distract her)

Chastity, do you like Italian food?
Because we could--

CHASTITY

(focused on Arness, wickedly
amused)

Don't worry, baby.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CHASTITY (cont'd)

I'll straighten Iron-Ass' French Vanilla
shit out for you but good.

PETER

All right! All right! Whatever it is --
yes! Yes! And yes!

CHASTITY

Place to stay.

PETER

Yes!

CHASTITY

You work on my case!

PETER

Around the clock!

CHASTITY

I leave when you sponge my record.

PETER

Consider it sponged, mopped, vacuumed and
disinfected!

CHASTITY

Good. I'd like a key, please.

Looking all around furtively, Peter takes out his house keys,
producing one, gives it to Chastity.

Ashley sees this, squinting in disbelief. Peter scans the
horizon, panicked.

PETER

She's not there?

(looking around wildly)

Where's Iron-A-- Mrs. Arness?

A suitably iron voice from behind them interrupts.

MRS. ARNESS (O.S.)

Mr. Hartman.

She has appeared from behind them.

She has caught Peter in the act of handing his house key to
Chastity. She looks Chastity up and down, eyes raking over
her.

MRS. ARNESS (CONT'D)

Who is your associate?

(CONTINUED)

She spits out the word "associate" like she doesn't believe for a minute that Chastity could have a legitimate reason for existing.

An anguished moment while Peter's mind races. And then... the idea.

PETER

She's... our... nanny!

Chastity's eyebrow shoots up. What?! Sarah and Georgey approach.

GEORGEY

Dad, they're out of hot dog--

PETER

--right, kids? Don't we love Chastity, our nanny?

He puts his arm around Chastity. He eyes them meaningfully. Support me, here! Sarah smiles wholesomely.

SARAH

She's been with us since I was born.

CHASTITY

(admiringly)

Sarah, you a smooth little li--

Peter has stepped on her foot. A beat. Chastity has to decide what to say next. A look between she and Peter. Is she going to play along?

CHASTITY (CONT'D)

Yazzuh. I gwine to da pool wit da chillun. Maybe da watuhmelon truck be drivin' by -- ooo-wee!

Iron Ass -- ahem -- Mrs. Arness stares.

HOWIE

The pool's this way...

Chastity takes the kids' hands and Howie leads them off.

SARAH

Nice to meet you, Mrs. Arness...

As his family walks away, Peter can see all their shoulders shaking -- they're getting the giggles. Peter tries to distract Mrs. Arness.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

Shall we sit?

She sits, opens the 80-page document.

PETER (cont'd)

(with utterly false bravado)

So! My inside source tells me your tax bracket will be going down to 6% -- thank God for a Republican President, huh--?

EXT. POOL AREA - DAY

Chastity walks with the kids back to their pool spot. She and the kids are still giggling. Howie catches up to them.

HOWIE

Chastity. Hi, we haven't properly met, I'm Howie Rottman, Peter's close and completely trustworthy friend...

He grabs her hand, looking into her eyes a moment too long.

CHASTITY

What you lookin' at?

HOWIE

Nothing, I just, uh, was, I just, uh, like your... dreadlocks. They're, uh, very luxuriant, and--

CHASTITY

You pushing up on me?

She is amused. Gives him a hard look.

HOWIE

No, no, no... yes.

She shoots him a look that would freeze Bette Davis at 20 yards.

HOWIE (CONT'D)

Not in the running, then. Got it.

He is so totally crestfallen that she feels a stab of pity.

CHASTITY

Tell you what. I could use and abuse you for a sandwich, tho'.

Howie smiles.

(CONTINUED)

HOWIE
I'm down with that.

She suppresses a smile at his pathetic attempt at ebonics.

CHASTITY
Don't do that again. It's ugly, man.

HOWIE -
(nodding gravely)
Doesn't come naturally to me, yes, I see
that now...

CHASTITY
Talk 'nerd,' like your herd, we get along
fine.

Relieved, Howie signals a waiter.

EXT. PETER'S HOUSE - DAY

Mrs. Kline is on her porch, watering her potted orchids. We
see Peter, Sarah, and Georgey walking strangely up the
walkway -- scuttling like crabs.

ANOTHER ANGLE

And we see that they are hiding a crouching Chastity --
sneaking her into the house.

PETER
So your main objective, the thing around
which your life now revolves, is to
never be seen by Mrs. Kline, understood?

CHASTITY
(looking around)
Who Mrs. Kline?

PETER
My neighbor, my boss' sister, and up
until now we've enjoyed a perfectly
pleasant rela--

CHASTITY
(realizing)
Ooh. You bought this house on purpose,
suck up to yo' boss' folks!

Peter looks flustered. Busted.

PETER
That's ridicu--

(CONTINUED)

CHASTITY

(grinning)

Ooh! Sucky sucky, thas some BIG suckin'
goin' on! That's some swallowin' goin'
on!

PETER

(acid)

I've gotten your drift.

They enter--

INT. PETER'S HOUSE - DAY

CHASTITY

(skeptical)

So jus' how'm I supposed to keep Mrs.
Klan from seeing me forever?

PETER

Kline! Mrs. Kline!

CHASTITY

--'Cause if you think I ain't never gonna
go out just 'cause o' this whole Aryan
nation you got going on around here--!

PETER

Aryan. Interesting word. Bespeaks some
historical knowledge, which, it's hard
for me to imagine you having...

SARAH

(brightly)

Well. I've got a mound of studying...
I'm not coming down for dinner, Daddy,
I've got a sandwich...

She skips up the stairs two at a time, goes into her room and
shuts the door.

PETER

That's my great girl. I won't disturb
you.

(turning to Chastity)

You see that, Chastity? It's not too
late for you, you know. You could go
back to school, apply yourself, get a
passing familiarity with the English
language... there's no end to what a
person who really tries can accomplish...

(CONTINUED)

Chastity, bored, sees a flash of something out the window, something in her eye-line Peter can't see:

EXT. PETER'S HOUSE - CHASTITY'S POV

Peter's precious daughter Sarah is climbing down drain pipe. She runs to a waiting car, which squeals off, as Peter drones on.

Chastity just smiles to herself. Turns back to Peter.

CHASTITY

Uh-huh.

EXT. A LAKESIDE VACATION CABIN - DAY

Kate is having her feet rubbed by Gary, who clearly adores her. She is on the phone.

KATE

What are you talking about?!

CROSS CUT WITH:

EXT. A YACHT - DAY

Ashley is on the boat with her rich boyfriend.

ASHLEY

A nanny!

KATE

Are you sure?

ASHLEY

That's what he said. And she didn't look like any nanny I'd ever seen. She was all... nappy and funky and... welfare-ish, it was--

KATE

Oh stop. I'm not surprised. How could he spend the time alone with them? He hired somebody.

ASHLEY

But this woman-- I mean, shouldn't you be looking at references?!

KATE

Oh, Ashley. One thing Peter is is responsible.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

45

KATE (cont'd)
It's not like he's going to hire a
convicted felon!

INT. PETER'S STUDY - NIGHT

Peter pores over mounds of papers, cursing under his breath.
Chastity looks over his shoulder.

PETER
"Resisting arrest, assaulting an officer,
repeated attempts at eye-gouging...
scrotum-crushing, and head-butting...."!

CHASTITY
I was little riled up, bein' framed an'
all.

PETER
Your clothes and I.D. found at the
scene...?!

CHASTITY
All plants. I never robbed nobody.

PETER
(not believing her)
O-kay.

CHASTITY
I want a new trial.

PETER
So did Son of Sam, but it wasn't exactly
in the cards!

CHASTITY
I know my rights. I get an appeal.

PETER
Well, no, you only get an appeal if
you're convicted of something and your
incarcerated. You've already been
released.

She smiles weakly. A shift in her eyes. Something she's not
telling us?

CHASTITY
I just want to clear my name.

PETER
All right. But this is going to take
some time.

(CONTINUED)

CHASTITY

How much time?

She's wandered over towards the windows, now fully visible from the street. Peter pulls her back, shuts the curtains.

PETER

Plenty of time for this nanny thing to blow up in our faces. Because you don't look like any child care provider on this planet! Anyone who sees you here will think I'm doing dime bags!

(sighs)

Look, don't take this the wrong way.

CHASTITY

You want to change my style.

PETER

Yes.

CHASTITY

(thinking)

Like, nobody recognize me...?

PETER

I know, that's very insulting prospect, you probably don't like fitting into "the Man's" idea of the way people should and shouldn't look, but--

CHASTITY

(cutting him off)

You payin'?

Astonished at her compliance, he nods.

INT. WOMENS' CLOTHING STORE - DAY

QUICK CUTS OF CLOSE-UPS OF PETER AND CHASTITY as they explain what they're looking for in female fashion:

PETER

--something very plain, quiet, sedate--

CHASTITY

--spandex-glittery-kinky--

PETER

--high neck--

(CONTINUED)

CHASTITY
--low cut--

PETER
--flat--

CHASTITY
--spiky--

PETER
--wool--

CHASTITY
--kinda animal print--

PETER
--one look should say, "librarian." --

CHASTITY
--Don't be half a ho, know what I'm
sayin'?--

The cuts end. THE MIDDLE-AGED SALESLADY stares at them both.

SALESLADY
I'm getting a very mixed message.
Perhaps you and your... wi--

PETER
Oh, GOD, no--

SALESLADY
Girlfr--

PETER
Just let go of it.

Chastity brightly holds up a WHOREY, BRIGHT RED MATCHING BRA
AND PANTY SET.

SALESLADY
(frosty)
--Employee... should consider another
store.

And then we see it...

THROUGH THE WINDOW,

looking in, at this middle-aged man buying a bra and panties
for his juicy black girl friend... is ASHLEY!

(CONTINUED)

She grabs her cell phone, dials.

EXT. A SALON - DAY

Peter and Chastity exit. Tastefully dressed, her hair now combed out and styled, she looks like a completely different person, if not exactly like herself. She catches her reflection in the window, pissed.

CHASTITY

Damn, I look like some church bitch who whack! the little kids with the ruler an' shit!

PETER

(taking in her appearance)
Look at the bright side. A taxi might actually stop for you.

CHASTITY

This ain't gonna change one thing about me, dawg!

PETER

I wouldn't dare to hope.

INT. PETER'S HOUSE - STUDY - NIGHT

Peter, ear plugs in his ears, is trying to work. We hear the faint throbbing of hip-hop music.

INT. PETER'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

We hear the music as it really is -- blasting! Chastity is cooking dinner... her way... bopping to LOUD HIP-HOP MUSIC as she adds a serious shot of pepper sauce to her concoction... Georgey and Sarah are helping and bopping with her... Sarah is actually a pretty good dancer and Georgey has promise.

CHASTITY

Stylin,' little man! Shake that baby butt! Yeah!

Georgey beams, tries a cool move, falls on his ass. The phone rings. Sarah answers, laughing.

SARAH

Hello? Hi, Mom.

INT. CLOSE ON - KATE

Confused by the loud hip hop music she's hearing from the phone.

KATE
Sarah--? I can't hear you...

AND WE CROSS-CUT
BETWEEN THEM:

INT. PETER'S HALL - NIGHT

Sarah leaves the kitchen. The noise diminishes.

SARAH
No, that's not my music, that's--
She realizes she shouldn't explain Chastity.

SARAH (CONT'D)
It's just... on.

KATE
Listen, Sarah... I... this is awkward...
this nanny person...

SARAH
Chastity? Oh, she's okay.

KATE
So she is a nanny. She's not his...?

SARAH
(laughs)
You thought they were together?

KATE
I just... Ashley told me that their
relationship might be... more than...

SARAH
Oh! Please, Mom! Think about Dad.

KATE
You're right. Of course, you're right.
Your father's not cool enough to have a
black girlfriend.

SARAH
Mom... are you jealous?

Sarah is intrigued by this possibility.

(CONTINUED)

KATE

Why should I be jealous, when nothing's happening? --Want to come home early?

SARAH

Mom. You're in the mountains.

A WIDER ANGLE REVEALS--

INT. KATE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kate is alone. Her suitcase stands next to the door.

KATE

Um. Right. I...
(sighs, admitting)
Actually, I came back.
(sighs)
I wasn't ready.

SARAH

Oh. Sorry.

KATE

Don't tell your father! I don't want him
smirking! He'll say, I told you so!
(beat, vulnerable)
Want to come over?

The music from the other room gets cranked up a notch. We see, through the door, Chastity and Georgey dancing and laughing.

SARAH

Wouldn't that mean I would have to tell
him you're here?

KATE

Yeah. Right. I'll see you Sunday.

Kate hangs up, lonely and confused.

INT. PETER'S OFFICE - DAY

Peter, way stressed out, is tap-dancing a mile a minute.

PETER

Mrs. Arness, but why would you want to
see my personal tax returns?
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

51

PETER (cont'd)
--Are you suggesting I might cheat on my
own
taxes--?!

CROSS CUT WITH--

INT. MRS. ARNESS' LIVING ROOM - DAY

She is on the phone.

MRS. ARNESS
A master of the instrument will naturally
want to play a Stradivarius.

BACK TO PETER

PETER
As always, pungently put. I'll get them
right over.

He hangs up, muttering to himself. His intercom is buzzing
shrilly.

PETER (CONT'D)
(into intercom)
Tanya, no more calls--

TANYA'S VOICE
It's not a call, I--
(not to Peter, to someone
unseen)
No you can't, you don't have an ap-- OH
GOD, DON'T! PLEASE! NO!

We HEAR Tanya CRYING. Peter cringes. Leans into intercom,
sighing with resignation.

PETER
Send her in, Tanya.

He hangs up as Chastity enters. Peter points, furiously, to
his crowded desk, blinking phone lines.

PETER (CONT'D)
This couldn't wait until tonight?

Chastity pulls a piece of paper out of her purse.

CHASTITY
No. You gotta check this out.

PETER
What it is.

(CONTINUED)

CHASTITY

Found a deposition. Prosecution interviewed an eye witness and she told them the Perpetrator didn't have a gold tooth. They never told my attorney about this bitch.

PETER

That's withholding -ex--

CHASTITY

Exculpatory evidence. People V. Stanley.

PETER

How do you know about that?

CHASTITY

Damn, all I got time to do in there was read! Must've read this shit a thousand times.

PETER

And with comprehension!

CHASTITY

Hey. Don't you be mistakin' the way I talk for what I do and don't understand! I've been reading the law. I read so much you thought I was a lawyer!

PETER

Don't remind me. "Tuscan Food?" "Second hand book stores?"

CHASTITY

(shrugs)

We get magazines.

PETER

It was actually brilliant, in a sick sort of way.

Chastity smiles, the first real compliment she's ever gotten from Peter.

TANYA'S VOICE

(in intercom)

Peter, Ed's coming down to see you!

PETER

Oh God. That's my boss!

(CONTINUED)

CHASTITY

(teasing, mischevious)

Uh-oh. A sista in the man's office!
Want me to hide?

Her eyes flick to the only possible hiding place.

PETER

So he can find a woman on her knees under
my desk? Good idea! OF COURSE NOT.
Come on--

CHASTITY

I'm goin', I'm goin'.

INT. PETER'S OFFICE CORRIDOR - DAY

Peter, his hand at Chastity's elbow, firmly escorts her to
the elevator bank. He rings for the elevator.

PETER

Look. May I ask you something?

CHASTITY

Go.

PETER

You obviously have... certain pockets of
intelligence, and even some scraps of an
education... why do you talk and act the
way you do? Why do you need to be so...

CHASTITY

Street.

PETER

If you will, yes, "street."

CHASTITY

It ain't actin'. It's a part of me. You
think I can't talk like you?

(perfect old English)

"Speak the speech, I pray you, as I
pronounced it to you; trippingly on the
tongue..."

PETER

See? If you know Shakespeare, then why--

(CONTINUED)

CHASTITY

Like that one? You do? Well, you can kiss my black ass. I don't need your acceptance. This is who I am.

PETER

You think I don't have to compromise the way I act? You think I like pretending to be a member of the NRA for Mrs. Arness? There are things we do in life because we have to.

We see ED TOBIAS coming down the hall. He sees Peter, gestures at him -- get over here!

The elevator doors open. Chastity gets in.

CHASTITY

(softly)

And there's things we think we have to do that we really don't.

As Peter walks over to Ed... the elevator doors start to close...

A MALE HAND jams in the doors, causing them to open again at the last second. It's Howie, grinning with delight.

HOWIE

To what do I owe the thrill?

PETER'S POV - FROM DOWN THE HALL

He sees Howie taking Chastity off the elevator!

ON CHASTITY AND HOWIE

HOWIE (CONT'D)

Now, look, Chastity, I admit, I was not at my most suave-- But-- you must admit, you really enjoyed making me ill at ease and feeling generally rejected and inferior--

CHASTITY

Thass true.

HOWIE

...and what better opportunity to inflict further humiliations than... on a date?

She laughs. He won't give up.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

is trying to pay attention to Ed, but still nervous about Chastity not having left. Gendler saunters into frame.

TOBIAS

Peter, we're really in a crunch.

GENDLER

Listen, I can handle the Arness research, I have no problem staying late tonight...

PETER

I have no problem, midnight, whatever you need, Ed...

ON CHASTITY AND HOWIE

As she peers over at Tobias and Peter.

CHASTITY

Ooh, the old guy Ed?

HOWIE

Yes, that's our boss.

CHASTITY

Ol' Ed got some kinda kinky hair goin' on... poofy kinda lips... Ed got a little ink spot in him, don't he, now?

HOWIE

It... might not be the most prudent thing... to mention it.

CHASTITY

He pass for white, but Chastity knows!

Chastity starts down the hall, grinning.

HOWIE

If it's all the same to you, I would really not advise calling our boss an eggplant to his face-- !

Howie scurries after her, nervous, as Chastity inserts herself boldly between Peter and Tobias. Tobias stares at her... Peter realizes he must introduce them.

PETER

Chastity, my nanny, this is Ed...

(CONTINUED)

CHASTITY

Hi, Egg--

Howie winces.

CHASTITY (CONT'D)

(correcting)

Ed.

TOBIAS

Oh. A nanny.

(realizing, to Peter)

Then you can stay late, you don't have a child-care problem.

CHASTITY

Thass right! He sure don't!

Gendler looks annoyed.

PETER

Just one moment, Ed.

Peter jerks Chastity aside, hissing:

PETER (CONT'D)

Now, if I let you do this, you really, actually have to watch them. Do you understand that?

CHASTITY

(grins)

Better than you know.

INT. SARAH'S ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

The window opens. Sarah climbs in. --A more feral Sarah, with spiky hair and red lipstick. She is shocked to find that CHASTITY is sitting on her bed!

CHASTITY

Mm-hm. Your eyes not lookin' so tired. Good thing you took a break and all.

SARAH

Where's my Dad.

CHASTITY

I'm in charge tonight, sugah. So why don't you juss tell me 'bout this steamin' mound o' bullshit you been layin' on your folks?

(CONTINUED)

SARAH

(unfazed)

Hey. I keep my 4.0. They don't care about anything else.

CHASTITY

You sure about that? You could just tell your Daddy you got a boyfriend.

SARAH

He couldn't take it.

Chastity gets up, starts for the door. Sarah is nervous.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Are you going to tell him?

CHASTITY

Tell him what. You lyin,' sneakin' out at night an' all? Couldn't do that. 'Cause it's nothin' I didn't do myself.

Sarah smiles.

CHASTITY (CONT'D)

'Course, look where I ended up. Locked up, eatin' gummy mucousy powdered eggs and shit, mean bitches tryin' to jump my ass or cut me, scrubbing them brown old crusties outta the toilets...?

Sarah's smile fades.

CHASTITY (CONT'D)

No. I ain't gonna tell him.

SARAH

Thanks.

EXT. GOLF COURSE - DAY

Peter is playing a round with Mrs. Arness. She sinks a five-footer.

PETER

That's commendable, Mrs. Arness.

MRS. ARNESS

I detest the sport. I play to honor my late husband, who adored it.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

And should you sign with us you will be able to pay tribute to him on a regular basis, because membership in this club is included in your--

He squints at the horizon, seeing something unsavory.

PETER (CONT'D)

Excuse me, one moment...

HOWIE AND CHASTITY -!!!

are walking by the clubhouse. They move to the takeout area. Howie addressed the attendant.

HOWIE

Yo, man, gimme some Aquafina H2-0 and a six-packa Colt 45.

CHASTITY

Remember our little talk? About you wantin' to stay alive and all?

HOWIE

You are too cute.

She smiles. Peter skids into frame, aghast.

PETER

What is she doing here--?!

HOWIE

(low)

She da bitch of my dreams, man.

ASHLEY (O.S.)

I was just going to ask the same thing.
What is she doing here?

Peter, Howie and Chastity turn and look. Ashley is sitting in her usual spot, this time with another rich-looking guy.

CHASTITY

I got as much right to be here as yo' bulimic little ass!

ASHLEY

Not out of a uniform, you don't.

Chastity takes a murderous step forward.

(CONTINUED)

CHASTITY

Say what again?

ASHLEY

Save it, Bullah. Unless you're really a nanny, which I doubt you ever were--

Chastity lunges forward to attack. Peter restrains her, pulls her aside.

PETER

Have you EVER had a temperate moment? A moment when you controlled the impulse that rockets from your spinal cord to your fists?

CHASTITY

No! And this ain't the time to start!

PETER

(hissing)
Yes it is!

He flicks a nervous glance at

MRS. ARNESS

who is starting to look around for him.

PETER (CONT'D)

Mrs. Arness is NOT going to look over here and see my nanny doing a piledriver on a white woman, now PLEASE. Please. I am sheltering you. I am helping you.

Chastity takes a few breaths. Incredibly, she seems to calm down.

CHASTITY

A'right. Ol' Iron-Ass so important. I'll let it go.

PETER

Thank you. Thank you. That is mature, that is wise... I'm proud of you.

(to Howie)
Keep her walking... that way...

Howie puts his arm around Chastity walks her away from the danger zone. Ashley smirks as she gets up, disappears into the Ladies Room. Peter sighs with relief.

(CONTINUED)

Several moments after Peter is out of frame, Chastity turns to Howie.

CHASTITY

Sugah, I jus' got to make myself a little more luscious for you... I be right back...

He smiles, nods. She marches into the Ladies Room after Ashley.

INT. COUNTRY CLUB BATHROOM - DAY

Ashley powders her face in the mirror. She looks down to dab the powder, looks up and WHAM... Chastity looms in the mirror behind her.

ASHLEY

AHHHH!

(spinning around)

What are you DOING?!

CHASTITY

Takin' out the white trash.

With a swipe of her leg, Ashley knocks Chastity's feet out from under her. Chastity tumbles to the floor.

Ashley kicks up, punches off with her hands springing to her feet. Chastity rises. Ashley assumes a fighting stance.

ASHLEY

You messed with the wrong WASP, Jemimah.

Chastity throws a combination of punches, which Ashley blocks. Ashley responds with two quick jabs to Chastity's head, followed by a kick that sends Chastity into the mirrors.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)

Compliments of Tai-Bo, two hours a day,
five days a week.

Chastity shakes the cobwebs off.

CHASTITY

Know the difference between me and you,
Cream Puff?

ASHLEY

Two hundred pounds?

(CONTINUED)

Chastity attacks. Ashley ducks under a wild right, while connecting with one of her own to Chastity's ribs.

Ashley unleashes with a series of punches that renders Chastity useless. A spinning back kick to the side of the head throws Chastity against the wall. Tiles crack.

Chastity wipes the blood from her mouth.

CHASTITY

I dig the pain.

ASHLEY

Then you came knocking on the right stall door.

CHASTITY

Oh, it's on and cracklin', Girlfriend.

The two women stand toe-to-tow, exchanging blows in the middle of the bathroom. A knock-down, drag-out brawl. Chastity getting the worst of it.

A kick to Chastity's belly staggers her. Ashley charges. She launches a left. Chastity ducks. Ashley nails the wall, SCREAMS in pain.

OOF! A knee into Ashley's gut. Ashley doubles over.

CHASTITY (CONT'D)

Compliments of the hood, twenty-four hours a day, all my life.

A bomb of an upper cut sends Ashley sprawling. Chastity pulls Ashley to her feet. She spins her towards the stall door. WHAM. Uses Ashley's head to open it.

Ashley crashes through. Chastity forces her head into the bowl.

CHASTITY (CONT'D)

You know, for a skinny white ho you tougher than you look.

Chastity takes hold of Ashley's panties and RIPS them up her ass. Ashley howls in pain.

CHASTITY (CONT'D)

You just need more ring experience.

Chastity lifts Ashley up and hangs her by her underwear on a coat hook. Ashley dangles two feet off the ground.

(CONTINUED)

CHASTITY (CONT'D)

Today's lesson, hangin' hookas. And keep your mouth shut about this. Or I bring all my gangsta friends up to yo' gated community to give you a halla!

EXT. COUNTRY CLUB - GOLF COURSE - DAY

Peter is walking Mrs. Arness to her car...

PETER

I can have all the paperwork ready by Monday... no reason to come to the office, of course I will come to you...

An excruciating pause while Iron-Ass thinks about this.

MRS. ARNESS

We-ell....

And during this pause, behind her back, crawling on all fours, comes a BRUISED and BATTERED Ashley. Chastity comes out behind her, smacking her hands together in triumph.

Mrs. Arness is quarter-turned at a dangerous angle -- close to seeing this! Peter grabs her elbow "steering" her to her car.

MRS. ARNESS (CONT'D)

All right. Monday it is.

Peter's heart leaps, but then... Ashley is audibly whimpering!

MRS. ARNESS (CONT'D)

What's that?

Mrs. Arness starts to turn. Chastity gives Ashley a swift kick, rendering her unconscious. The whimpering stops.

PETER

Coyotes. They're all over the course -- see? There's one!

He points in a completely different direction so she'll be distracted and won't complete the turn. She squints.

MRS. ARNESS

I don't see it.

PETER

He's gone now -- you know how they skulk...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

63

Chastity drags Ashley out of frame -- just in time -- as Mrs. Arness turns and gets in her car.

INT. PETER'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Peter comes in, livid, ready to kill Chastity over the close call. He storms in, only to find...

CHASTITY AND GEORGEY

curled up on the couch, a magazine open on Chastity's lap. Georgey is poring over it.

GEORGEY

Dear Ad...

CHASTITY

Vi..

GEORGEY

Advisor...

CHASTITY

Very good, sugah!

GEORGEY

(with great difficulty, but
perservering)

I... met... these... trip...lets... in...
a... club...

Peter rushes to the couch in horror, snatches up the magazine!

PETER

What is this?! What are you doing?

We can see it now, and of course it's a Playboy. The bunny on the cover holds a peeled banana to her lips.

PETER (CONT'D)

This is the most horrifying,
irresponsible--

(it hits)

He read!

(to Georgey)

You read! My kid read!

(turning on a dime to Chastity)

I'm going to kill you!

(to Georgey)

I'm so proud!

(to Chastity)

I'm turning you in.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

64

PETER (CONT'D)

(to Georgey)

Let's have some ice cream, champ!

He pulls his son off the couch and hugs him. Georgey is thrilled at the praise.

Over Georgey's shoulder, Peter glares at Chastity.

CHASTITY

Don't look at me. -Found it in your drawer.

PETER

I am a grown man, what I read in the privacy of my own--

CHASTITY

That stuff you give him to read...?
Bunnies in the meadow...? It's boring,
man! He just needed a little juice.
He's on his way now!

Peter looks at Georgey's shining face, realizes he can't be mad at Chastity. Not about this.

CHASTITY (CONT'D)

I know I almost messed you up today.
Y'know, I just wanted do something to say
I was...

The word "sorry" is not in her vocabulary. But it hangs in the air between them.

CHASTITY (CONT'D)

And I got another surprise.

PETER

Oh, goody!

INT. PETER'S FOYER - NIGHT

Peter stands before his SARAH, who's standing in the doorway with a CLEAN-CUT YOUNG MAN we've never seen before.

SARAH

Dad... this is Aaron... we've been
dating.

PETER

(choking)
Date--! Date--!

SARAH

Dad. I'm sixteen.

(CONTINUED)

AARON

How do you do, sir?

Aaron sticks out his hand. His manners are perfect.

AARON (CONT'D)

(ingenuous)

I've been really uncomfortable not having met you. I told Sarah it was very important that you feel all right with my taking her to my parents' for dinner.

PETER

Who are your parents?

AARON

John and Midge Stockbridge...?

PETER

The Pasadena Stockbridges?

(impressed)

Well.

EXT. PETER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Peter and Aaron are shaking hands at the front door. Sarah waits demurely beside Aaron.

AARON

Eleven at the latest.

PETER

I'm just glad this is out in the open.

AARON

I wouldn't hear of any other way.

The door slams.

INT. PETER'S FOYER - NIGHT

Chastity smiles at Peter.

CHASTITY

See? Was that so hard?

INT. THE LOW-RIDER AT PETER'S CURB - NIGHT

The car door opens. Sarah and Aaron are waiting to get in. The driver, a HOODY-LOOKING KID, smiles.

HOODY KID

Did it work?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

66

AARON
Simplicity itself.

Sarah slaps five with Aaron, gets in the front seat and
TONGUE KISSES THE HOODY KID, who is clearly her real
boyfriend. Aaron gets in the back.

AARON (CONT'D)
You owe me a twenty.

INT. PETER'S FOYER - NIGHT

Peter regards Chastity with grudging respect.

PETER
There's nothing to eat in the house...

CHASTITY
You comin' to a point?

PETER
I thought... we should all... go out and
grab something...

Georgey, visible on the couch engrossed with his nose in a
book, calls from the other room.

GEORGEY
No thanks! I'll stay with Mrs. Klan!

Peter isn't happy a) that Georgey's not coming and b) that
he's now blithely saying "Mrs. Klan" instead of Mrs. Kline.
But he sighs...

INT. UPSCALE SOUTHERN SUPPER CLUB - NIGHT

The place has a very plush, high-living vibe. Beautifully
dressed, upscale blacks mingle with cool whites, there's a
smoking band, and a dance floor.

Peter and Chastity are sitting at a table, both better
dressed than we've seen them, delicious-looking food and a
bottle of wine on their table.

CHASTITY
Now this is humpin' large!

PETER
Is that the image you want to create in
people's minds, when you really just
mean, "This is nice."--?

(CONTINUED)

CHASTITY

Why the word "humpin'" make you so uptight?

The people at the next table look at her as she articulates the word.

PETER

Does the concept of being "in public" have the smallest penetration?

(as she opens her mouth)

--I can't believe I used the words "small" and "penetrate" in the same sentence -- you're just writhing to do something with that, aren't you?

CHASTITY

It's your Freudian slip, baby.

PETER

And she reads psychology. Tell me something. How can you know so much and let your life come to so little? How can you think so little of yourself?

Chastity blinks. He's hit a nerve, though she'd never admit it.

PETER (CONT'D)

With what you know, you could be a paralegal tomorrow. If you'd deign to speak English, you could even become a lawyer.

CHASTITY

Oh, they're really gonna beat down my project door to let me into law school!

PETER

As a matter of fact, they want people exactly like you.

His cell phone rings. He reaches to answer it. Chastity grabs it out of his hand and SMASHES IT against the table.

PETER (CONT'D)

Why did you do that?!

CHASTITY

(because what he said hit a nerve)

You on the phone too much.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CHASTITY (cont'd)

All you do's work. That's why your wife ditched your sorry ass.

Exasperated, he picks up his wine glass and CHUGS his wine until it's gone.

ACROSS THE ROOM,

sitting, are KATE and ASHLEY. They don't see Peter and Chastity.

KATE

...no, Sarah says, no, he and this woman are not involved, and, she's a savvy girl, I believe her...

Ashley, whose makeup cannot entirely hide her bruises, speaks through a swollen, clenched jaw:

ASHLEY

Kate. You're supposed to not care.

KATE

I don't!

ASHLEY

I would really, really like not to talk about that woman.

KATE

Okay. How're you feeling? You think they'll get the guys who mugged you?

Ashley smiles weakly.

THE BAND

cranks up a hot tune.

PETER

Peter chugs a second glass of wine, draining it. Chastity has an idea. Chastity gets up, holds out her hands to Peter.

CHASTITY

Come with me!

PETER

Don't be a lunatic.

He's a little sloshed.

(CONTINUED)

CHASTITY

Come on, now! When's the last time you danced?

PETER

My wedding.

CHASTITY

No wonder you divorced! You never danced with her? What else did you never do?

PETER

Now, that's none of your--

YANK! She's jerked him to his feet. She pulls him to the dance floor. Knowing he has a competitive streak, she baits him:

CHASTITY

Show me your moves, Wonder Bread.

Peter takes her stiffly in his arms, starts a fairly respectable, but stodgy, fox-trot. Chastity starts laughing.

CHASTITY (CONT'D)

Are you dancin' or are you on line for the bathroom?

PETER

I learned with a metronome.

CHASTITY

Man, you don't dance from your brain! You got to move from the hip.

She starts to rotate her ass.

CHASTITY (CONT'D)

Like you got a ball-bearing joint in there... come on, come on... That's not so damn bad! Hey! What's so hard about that, huh?

Peter is starting... just starting... to have a little fun.

KATE AND ASHLEY

watch, flabbergasted.

PETER AND CHASTITY

start to do a snakey-hipped kinda thang. He is a little looped. It's not exactly working, but he's not a stiff either... he just looks bizarre.

KATE

is quivering with shock.

KATE

You see that?! It's true! They're...

(beat, hurt)

He never did that with me.

She turns to Ashley. Who is stricken, white, and trembling at the sight of Chastity.

KATE (CONT'D)

What is it?

ASHLEY

We have to go.

She jumps up, pulling Kate to her feet.

KATE

I'm going to talk to him...

ASHLEY

NO!!!

KATE

Why not?

ASHLEY

I can't tell you. If I talk about it, "gangsta people" will come to my house, scale my gates and "cut me!"

KATE

Did your head get bumped?

Nervous, Ashley nods, as

CHASTITY

snakes behind Peter, humping against his backside. He laughs.

EXT. THE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Kate and Ashley exit. Kate is distraught.

(CONTINUED)

KATE

He almost looked like a fun person out there... maybe I did something wrong... if he could be like that... but not with me...

ASHLEY

DO NOT tell me you're reconsidering the divorce!

KATE

No. No. What good would that do? You know what they say.

(getting teary)

"Once you go black, you never go back."

EXT. PETER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

His car pulls into the driveway. Chastity is driving, Peter in the passenger seat. His door opens. He falls into the driveway. Chastity gets out, rushes around, and helps him into the house...

INT. PETER'S FOYER - NIGHT

Peter staggers in, partially supported by Chastity. He is moaning with drunken self-pity.

PETER

...you know, I just wanted to give her.. the best... right? 'S why I worked like a dog... I couldn't believe... this beautiful woman agreed to marry me...! I wanted to give her everything... the three B's... a Beamer, Bierdermeyer... and Brentwood!

CHASTITY

Man! Bitches don't care about that shit!

PETER

(vulnerably defensive)

Bitches do too!

CHASTITY

Pete, I'm gonna help you get her back.

PETER

...Tell you a shecret... I drive by her house sometimes... our old house... just to remember...

(CONTINUED)

CHASTITY

Honey. You need a lesson in ghettitude.

Chastity's eyes scour around the room, eyes light on--

A HUGE PICASSO PRINT

on the wall. It's life-sized, one of his geometrically cockeyed women. Chastity pulls him to the painting.

CHASTITY (CONT'D)

This's Kate. Okay? Now what do you say?

PETER

Hi, Kate.

CHASTITY

Go on. Tell her how you feel.

Peter is having a hard time knowing where to begin with a anatomically incorrect female figure.

PETER

(to painting)

I... want to try again...

CHASTITY

Okay, stop, Nancy boy. You gotta cut through that! You gotta be a beast!

PETER

A beast.

CHASTITY

Talk nasty to her.

PETER

(to painting)

You're so hot... your eyes... are on the wrong side of your face...

CHASTITY

Nothin' about eyes! Grab her!

He grabs the frame of the painting.

CHASTITY (CONT'D)

Women wanna get grabbed, wanna get jumped. Tell her something nasty.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

I can't wait to put my hand down...
(a dubious glance down)
...wherever it is...

CHASTITY

Don't see that jigsaw woman! It's Kate!

PETER -

This is tough.

Chastity grabs him, moves him over to a LARGE BLACK MODERN SCULPTURE. It's all curves, and could, from the right angle, be interpreted as a vulva.

CHASTITY

There's your Kate. Touch her.

Peter runs his hand along the curve...

CHASTITY (cont'd)

What you gonna do to her?

PETER

(more into it now)
I'm going to pound you all night long!

CHASTITY

Yeah!

PETER

(clutching the sculpture
closer)
I'm going to take you... and ram you
through the floorboards!

CHASTITY

Now you gonna get some!

PETER

What? It's over? It's not over till I
say it's over, come here you molten hot
lava-slut!

CHASTITY

Push up on her! You go boy!

Peter's body is up against the sculpture.

CHASTITY (CONT'D)

Show me how you do it! Yeah! Go on,
throw her to the dawgs!

(CONTINUED)

Peter is starting to HUMP the SCULPTURE!

PETER

You like that? I can't hear you! Did you say "harder?"!

CHASTITY

Bust a move, baby! Go on, now--! Go!
Go! G--!

Jostled, the sculpture CRASHES OFF ITS PEDASTAL... Peter jumps out of the way, inadvertently KNOCKING CHASTITY TO THE GROUND, loses his balance, and FALLS ON TOP OF HER. And this would be the moment that--

MRS. KLINE AND GEORGEY

--choose to come in the front door. Mrs. Kline, seeing Peter squirming on top of a black woman, GASPS and COVERS GEORGEY'S EYES!

FLIP FRAME TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Peter stands, uncomfortable, before the senior partners. Gendler is there too, lounging insolently in a plush chair, eating grapes.

TOBIAS

... if there's something going on in your personal life that you'd like to explain...

PETER

No! No! We were moving furniture and lost our footing...!

TOBIAS

My sister is under a pretty firm impression you were humping a gigantic vulva.

Gendler suppresses a snicker.

PETER

It's amazing what people will read into a sculpture, it's so Rorschach...

Tobias is signalled, picks up a phone, murmurs into it.

(CONTINUED)

HOWIE

(low, to Peter)

Come clean. It's your best shot. You were drunk, you saw that succulent dark meat, it happens!

PETER

(low)

It didn't happen! -

HOWIE

(low)

Oh thank God, because I want her so bad... I was ready to kick your ass!

PETER

You can't imagine the extent to which I don't want to hear about this.

Tobias puts down the phone. Gendler pipes up, "helpful."

GENDLER

Listen, Stan, I'll still be happy to double-team with Peter, keep things running smoothly.

TOBIAS

(considering it)

All we need is for Mrs. Arness to suspect any kind of instability...

Peter, sweating, decides on a decisive attack.

PETER

How many years have I been here?

GENDLER

(genial)

God, man, isn't it, like, 30?

PETER

(furious)

No! 14, which is 12 more than you, and I should think, by now, I would have your trust, Ed!

(with absolute conviction)

There is no instability of any kind in my home!

EXT. PETER'S BACK YARD - NIGHT

Chastity is SNEAKING THROUGH THE BUSHES, looking nervously over her shoulder, not wanting to be discovered.

INT. PETER'S KITCHEN

He sits, taking his blood pressure. He looks at the results: he doesn't like it. He sighs, puts his head in his hands. Then suddenly HEARS, outside his window:

CHASTITY (O.S.)
It's not gonna be an easy job.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
I know it ain't.

Peter goes to his window, peers out.

EXT. PETER'S BACK YARD - NIGHT - PETER'S POV

Chastity is outside, talking to someone partially concealed in the bushes.

CHASTITY
I gotta know if things get hot, that
you're not gonna run out on me. This is
your chance to prove yourself to me.

MALE VOICE
I been waitin' four years for this. I
won't mess up.

ANOTHER ANGLE

We SEE the back door crack open slightly. Peter peering out. Now we can see the man, WIDOW, a menacing guy covered with a spider-web tattoo.

WIDOW
I'll be seein' you, baby.

Peter shuts the door just before she turns to go back in.

INT. PETER'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Chastity enters.

PETER (O.S.)
Planning another heist?

She turns, sees him sitting there.

CHASTITY
Now, why you say that?

(CONTINUED)

PETER

I don't know. Maybe the words, "job," and "heat" casually bandied between two tattooed people!

CHASTITY

That was my old boy friend, Widow. He just wanted to see if I was okay. I didn't want you to see him, because... he was my biggest mistake. And I knew you'd be all over my ass.

PETER

Oh, so now you suddenly care what I think?

A beat. She looks at him. Admits:

CHASTITY

I... might. A little bit.

He looks back at her for a second. She seems sincere.

PETER

No more midnight visits.

CHASTITY

Okay.

PETER

Convicted felon's honor?

She holds up her hand, vowing solemnly:

CHASTITY

Innocent convicted felon's honor.

Despite themselves, they smile at each other. The phone rings. Peter picks it up.

PETER

Hello. --Oh, Sarah, thank God it's you.
--Are you okay?

CLOSE ON - SARAH

at a loud party, with tears streaming down her cheeks.

SARAH

Fine. Is Chastity there?

Peter looks a little disgruntled.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Chastity pulls up in Peter's car. She bounds from the car up to the door where a teary-eyed Sarah waits. Inside the house, a party raves.

SARAH

I'm sorry. I didn't know who else to call.

CHASTITY

'S okay. What happened in there?

SARAH

My boyfriend's not the guy you met. I liked this other guy, but he wanted tonight to be the night, and... I wasn't ready... so he called me an ice queen and went upstairs with another girl--!

CHASTITY

He move in on you rough?

SARAH

Kind of... yeah...

Her eyes well up again. Chastity's jaw sets.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Chastity marches past a GROUP of FREAKS around a huge BONG and up the stairs.

A BOY draped in a black cloak stands guard outside a bedroom door. Chastity stops before him.

CHASTITY

Yo, is Mike up in there?

BOY 1

What's the password?

Chastity gives the Boy her best jailhouse stare.

BOY 1 (CONT'D)

Works for me.

The boy runs off. With one kick, Chastity smashes through the door.

INT. UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - NIGHT

The door splinters. Mike and a GIRL leap off the bed in fear. Chastity steps through the flying debris.

CHASTITY

Wassup, Dawg? Get out, slut.

The girl runs out the door. Mike stands defiant.

MIKE

Who the hell are you?

CHASTITY

You hurt Sarah's feelin's. You got about two minutes to apologize.

MIKE

Get a grip.

CHASTITY

You better start prayin' to whoever it is you pray to 'cause it's about to start rainin' bitch slaps.

Mike smirks.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Sarah HEARS SCREAMS, looks up. Chastity is HANGING a BRUISED, WHIMPERING MIKE out the window by his feet.

CHASTITY

Sarah! Mike has somethin' to say.

MIKE

I'm sorry! I'm sorry! God I'm SO sorry!

Sarah wipes the tears from her eyes and laughs. Party Goers gather outside. A WET STAIN forms around Mike's crotch.

CHASTITY

Looks like Romeo just pissed himself.

Everyone below laughs. Chastity pulls Mike back in.

INT. UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mike curls up in a fetal ball, hyperventilating.

CHASTITY

Keep away from Sarah or Pain--
(raises her right fist)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

80

CHASTITY (cont'd)
--an' her brother Sufferin'--
(raises left fist)
--are comin' back for you.

Mike nods.

INT. BMW - NIGHT

Chastity and Sarah laugh as they drive.

CHASTITY
You so good a liar, you fool even me!

SARAH
Yeah, I... I'm sorry about that.

CHASTITY
But you is a good little girl after all.

SARAH
(good-naturedly admitting)
Shut up.
(beat)
Thanks for... um...

CHASTITY
Nothing your Daddy wouldn'ta done.

SARAH
Please. He doesn't see me. He doesn't
hear me. I just give him the grades, and
he goes away.

CHASTITY
Now whass so bad about letting him know
you?

SARAH
He couldn't take it.

CHASTITY
You don't know that! He was a horny
young dawg once. I never told my daddy
anything -- and now he's dead. Chance
went away. Why don't you just tell
him... one time... what you're really
like. Give him that one chance... and
see what you git?

Sarah considers.

INT. PETER'S HOUSE - OUTSIDE SARAH'S DOOR - NIGHT

Chastity stands with Peter. He has his hand on Sarah's doorknob.

CHASTITY

Now. Before you go in there. You can not get mad. You got that? You do, she will never tell you anything again. This is it, dawg. One time special. No yelling.

PETER

Please. I've got it. Piece of cake.

INT. SARAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Peter sits on Sarah's bed, a glazed, horrified smile on his face. He wants to explode but he's desperately trying to hold it together.

PETER

...So... you got... into a car... with a boy... Chico, Chino... you're not really sure about the name... and drove... to a rave... with no seat belts... and then, were assaulted at a party!

Sarah nods, waiting for the explosion. Peter's smile gets more frozen... he can barely contain himself. Ends up expelling a huge breath.

PETER (CONT'D)

Well! What a night you've had!

Sarah is bursting with relief.

SARAH

Oh, Dad! I can't believe you're not killing me!

She clasps him tight in a hug.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I've got so much more to tell you! Let's do this again tomorrow night!

Peter just nods and smiles, mute with horror.

INT. PETER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Peter walks slowly in, then flings himself down on the bed, yelling, muffled, into the pillows...

(CONTINUED)

PETER
Daughter of SATAN!!! YOU'RE IN A BURKA
FOR LIFE! AHHHHHHHHHHH!

Having released that, he sits up. His eye catches--

A PICTURE ON THE DRESSER

It's a family photo of Peter, Kate and the kids when they were young and sweet...

HIGH SHOT ON PETER ON THE BED...

He stares at the ceiling for a long moment, regret in his eyes...

INT. PETER'S CAR - DRIVING - DAY

Peter is on his way home from work. He slows down, passing--

EXT. KATE'S HOUSE - DAY

It has a "For Sale" sign in front of it! Peter pulls up, gets out, staring. Suddenly he sees KATE coming around the side, taking out her garbage.

PETER
Kate!

Kate freezes, horrified that Peter is seeing her, especially in sweats carrying a sack of garbage. He approaches her.

PETER (CONT'D)
Kate, what are you doing back?

KATE
What are you doing here?!

PETER
It's my cut-off home from work.

KATE
No it's not.

PETER
I asked you first! I thought you were in the mountains!

KATE
Oh, I came back early. Termite problem. This whole wall is about to crumble, it's awful.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

Oh, so nothing went wrong on your--

KATE

No! He's great. How's your...

PETER

My what?

Your hot black mama.

KATE

...life? Anything new?

He has no idea what she's talking about.

PETER

No.

KATE

(noticing he's staring)
What.

PETER

You look...
(beautiful)
...rested.

KATE

I... uh, guess I'll come get the kids
tonight...

PETER

Kate, no... I'd really like to keep them
through Sunday. Is that okay?

KATE

Really? You're not too busy?

PETER

No. We're having a ball.

KATE

(beams)
Good, Peter. Good for you.

PETER

Are you really selling the house?

KATE

Oh. It was always too formal for me...
so big and cold...

(CONTINUED)

PETER
I thought you loved it.

KATE
No! I thought it was important to you...

PETER
No! It was for you!

KATE
(smiles)
Funny, huh. Guess we both really wanted
a bungalow.

They smile at each other for a beat, remembering. Even in
sweats, holding garbage, she really does look luminous.

PETER
Kate, we could still--

And his damn phone rings! Just like that! Kate sighs.

KATE
Go ahead.

Peter struggles with himself. Finally, he answers.

INT. PETER'S LIVING ROOM - CLOSE ON CHASTITY

CHASTITY
Dawg! Get yo' butt home!

PETER
(unconsciously using Chastity's
cadence)
I will come in my own sweet time, girl!

CHASTITY
No! You come now! Iron-Ass comin' over!

PETER
Iron Ass coming to my house?!

CHASTITY
She call to say she comin' now!

EXT. KATE'S HOUSE - DAY

Peter clicks his phone off, anguished.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

Kate, you don't know how much I want to
continue this conversation, but--

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. PETER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Peter squeals into the driveway! Races up his steps two at a
time, flings open the front door. The kids are there,
concerned.

INT. PETER'S FOYER - NIGHT

PETER

Where is she?!

SARAH

She's not here yet!

Peter looks around. The house is a mess.

PETER

Oh God. Oh my God.

Sarah and Georgey immediately rush around, cleaning up their
toys and crap. Even Chastity pitches in with Peter. He rips
a Playboy out of Georgey's hand!

CHASTITY

Peter. While we got this minute...

PETER

WHAT minute. Oh shit...

CHASTITY

There's something I really been meanin'
t' tell you...

Peter peers out the glass of his front door.

PETER

She's here!

They continue to hastily tidy up, four whirling dervishes...!
The doorbell rings. Several more beats as they scurry. It
rings again...

TIME CUT TO:

EXT. PETER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Peter, opens the door, with a large, phony smile. A sour-faced Mrs. Arness stands there. Glaring.

PETER

Mrs. Iron--
(twisting his mistake into a
word)
--ess... To what do I--

MRS. ARNESS

Mr. Gendler suggested you'd been having
some personal problems and that your home
was in some disarray.

PETER

(smiling, through clenched
teeth)
Oh Mr. Gendler did, did he...?!

MRS. ARNESS

Before I turn over my account to him,
felt I should judge for myself.

PETER

That is scrupulously fair of you,
particularly given that Mr. Gendler is
misinformed... please come in. Look
around. I hate to think of you under any
misapprehension about me or my family...

He opens the door wide. The house, hastily cleaned up, looks
perfect. Every surface immaculate. Flowers in a vase.

INT. PETER'S HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

Mrs. Arness walks in, looks around suspiciously, but the
place looks like a spread in Architectural Digest. The kids
are sitting in the den, studiously bent over their books,
"doing their homework." But of course they're just helping
with the con job.

PETER

Sarah, George, you remember Virginia
Arness...

SARAH

Lovely to see you again.
(brightly)
Dad, when you've got a minute, can you
help me with my report on Queen Victoria?

(CONTINUED)

Peter leans in, so only Sarah can hear. Under his breath:

PETER

Don't push it.

GEORGEY

(stage voice)

Don't forget, Dad, tomorrow you have to come to school and help distribute that food to the poor kids!

PETER

Do I ever forget?

GEORGEY

No, Dad. Never.

Mrs. Arness looks mollified. As she turns to check out another room Peter makes a "cut it out" gesture with his hands as the kids slap five with each other.

INT. PETER'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM

Mrs. Arness looks with approval at the beautifully set table with fine china and lit candles. Peter surreptitiously mops his brow, finishing just in time as she turns to him.

MRS. ARNESS

Well. You have a lovely home. And lovely family.

PETER

Thank you.

(taking her arm, guiding her to the door)

I'm so glad you got to see them. And since you are here, I just happen to have those papers ready for your signature, if you're at all inclined...

MRS. ARNESS

I am inclined. I am satisfied.

PETER

(under his breath)

Well. We're skating in Hell, aren't we?

MRS. ARNESS

What?

PETER

I happen to have those papers right here in my briefcase...

(CONTINUED)

He produces his briefcase. But she seems distracted. Her nose is crinkled up. She's... sniffing.

MRS. ARNESS

What is that heavenly smell?

Peter cringes.

PETER -

I'll... uh... find out.

INT. PETER'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Peter enters to find that Chastity is making smothered pork chops, singing to herself (a horrifyingly violent rap ditty that we will make up)... it goes something like this...

CHASTITY

Kill da bitch, she jus ain't no good...
Cut her up, cut her up, chop her up like
wood... she may got money but I tell you
what, she got a telephone pole stickin'
up her--

PETER

Chastity!!!

He motions at her to keep her voice down.

CHASTITY

Sorry, bro. She still here?

PETER

You know she's still here! Sh!

Chastity obligingly drops her voice as he goes, but quietly continues:

CHASTITY

KILL KILL KILL, dismember, dismember. We
gonna make it a night to remember...

INT. PETER'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Peter reappears.

PETER

Oh, it's just our Chastity getting our
dinner ready. As she does. Every night.

To his amazement, Mrs. Arness gives a nostalgic sigh.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. ARNESS

Ohhh. It's so nice that you have such accommodating help... You know, I was raised in the south...? And, that smells just like our Ivy's smothered pork chops. She was just wonderful -- we paid her nothing -- people had standards of service in those days, I can tell you...

(smelling again)

Collard greens...? Well, aren't you the lucky family. I'm sure it's delicious.

Peter realizes that she is hinting for an invitation he very much doesn't want to make. He takes her arm, leads her towards the door...

PETER

Well, of course, you can sign the papers tomorrow, if you're not ready.

MRS. ARNESS

I am entirely ready.

(another appreciative sniff)

But, of course, I don't want to interrupt your wonderful-smelling dinner.

Peter realizes there's no escape. He smiles an unhappy, fraudulent smile.

PETER

(agonized)

Then... would you like... to stay...?

Mrs. Arness smiles.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. PETER'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Peter walks back in. Looks at Chastity. She looks back at him, knowing something sinister is up.

CHASTITY

I don't like the that look. That's a ugly look. Some bad, ugly shit in that look.

PETER

I've sheltered you. I've fed you. I've helped you with your case. Remember what I said about sometimes, for the greater good, doing things we REEEEEALLY don't want to do...?

(CONTINUED)

She eyes him suspiciously. Peter, desperate, just drops to his knees in front of her. Clasps his hands together. Begging.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT -CLOSE ON

PETER'S CONTRACTS, sitting on the dining room table, a pen next to them, the bottom line signature sill blank. TILT UP TO SEE That Peter, Sarah, Georgey and Mrs. Arness are sitting at the table. The kitchen door swings open. And...

In comes Chastity... wearing a white maid's apron... hair smoothed back 50's style... carrying a large platter of pork chops...

Her eyes say it all. She wants to climb a water tower and Uzi all of them, particularly Mrs. Arness.

But, teeth gritted, she goes through with it, serving Mrs. Arness a pork chop.

MRS. ARNESS

Well! This certainly brings back memories. Ivy was the most wonderful cook and laundress...

(pointedly)

Of course, she did know to serve from the left.

Chastity gives her a malevolent smile. Mrs. Arness prattles on.

MRS. ARNESS (cont'd)

Well. Someday, if you work very hard, you'll improve.

CHASTITY

(through clenched teeth)

Well, thank you, ma'am.

MRS. ARNESS

--There wasn't anything that Ivy wouldn't scrub! Windows, sinks, toilets...

Behind her, Chastity quietly picks up A HUGE CANDELABRA, and IS ABOUT TO BRING IT DOWN ON MRS. ARNESS' HEAD!

Peter quietly stomps on Chastity's foot. Chastity stifles a yelp. Mrs. Arness, doesn't see, distracted by helping herself to creamed corn.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. ARNESS (cont'd)

Mmm! You know, there was a very charming
Negro spiritual Ivy's brother used to
sing... he'd come in from the tobacco
fields...

Chastity PICKS UP THE CANDELABRA AGAIN. Sarah's had enough,
too.

SARAH

Let her do it, Dad.

PETER

Kids! Isn't it time for that educational
program on TV?

GEORGEY

What--

PETER

GO!!

SARAH

With pleasure.

She and Georgey get up. We see them go into the den, turn on
the TV...

Peter turns to Mrs. Arness.

PETER

I'm sorry, I interrupted you.

MRS. ARNESS

Oh. This charming negro spiritual...
let's see if I can remember...

To Peter's horror, (and to the tune of "Take Me To The
Water") she starts singing!

MRS. ARNESS (cont'd)

(singing)

"Thank you to the Massa...

Thank you lawd... fo' givin' me da
Massa...

Always love mah Massa...

From da cradle to da grave..."

Behind her, Chastity puts down the candelabra... and picks up
a LARGE CARVING KNIFE... Peter leaps to his feet, STRUGGLES
WITH CHASTITY FOR POSSESSION OF THE KNIFE.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

I think Mrs. Arness can cut her own meat!

CHASTITY

(hissing in Peter's ear)

Get her hood-wearing ass outta here!

PETER

(hissing back)

She has to sign first!

And, as if feeling his urgency, Mrs. Arness, actually picks up the pen...! Her pen hovers over the dotted line.

GEORGEY (O.S.)

Dad...?

PETER

Not now, Georgey.

INT. THE DEN - NIGHT

Georgey and Sarah are staring at the TV.

SARAH

Um, no, Dad, you have to see this...

It's "America's Most Wanted." And there, on the TV, is a PICTURE OF CHASTITY...!

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Peter focuses on what the MALE COMMENTATOR is saying...

MALE COMMENTATOR

... still at large after a daring escape
is Charlene "Chastity" Morton...

Peter freezes. Chastity freezes. Mrs. Arness' pen freezes over the contract.

MALE COMMENTATOR (cont'd)

...Convicted of armed robbery, she had
only served four years of an eight-year
sentence and is considered cunning and
highly dangerous... Arlene...?

The CAMERA GLIDES PAST the kids in the dining room doorway,
staring at Chastity... past Peter staring at her too...
PUSHING IN ON Mrs. Arness' apoplectic face...

CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

TWO WITHERED HANDS (MRS. ARNESS')

They are holding Peter's contract... sticking it in the lit candle... They go up in FLAMES!!

EXT. PETER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

With a brutal BANG! Mrs. Arness' limo door is slammed shut by her driver, in Peter's protesting face. The car squeals from the curb.

Peter turns back, defeated, to see Chastity standing on the front porch. Sarah and Georgey there, too, staring at her.

CHASTITY

I did try to tell you, dawg.

PETER

Get your things.

CHASTITY

I'm still innocent.

PETER

I'm only not turning you in because of my kids. They cared for you. But none of us ever want to see you here, or anywhere near us, again.

She moves towards Peter, tries to hug him, but he shrugs it off, shrinking from her touch. She looks at Georgey, who tries to go to her, but Peter holds him back. She sighs. She knows it's over.

CHASTITY

I'll get my stuff.

INT. PETER'S OFFICE - CORRIDOR - DAY

Peter and Howie walk down the corridor, rehearsing what he's going to say to the partners. Gendler passes, smiling smugly -- he obviously knows.

Howie is rehearsing Peter's spin on the Chastity situation.

HOWIE

Okay. You never saw her in your life, she broke and entered... she was hiding in your house, the Thing in the Attic...

PETER

I introduced her as my nanny.

(CONTINUED)

HOWIE

Okay. Twin sister. Wrong girl. You're suing the TV show for 10 million dollars...

PETER

I don't think there's a spin on the planet I can put on this, Howie! Tobias is going to fire me, and -- ooh! Another goody! I may be going to jail!

HOWIE

Maybe Iron-Ass didn't call the cops.

PETER

Of course Iron-Ass called the cops!

HOWIE

Maybe not. You think the old bitch wants her name in the papers?

PETER

Good point. I'm going to cling to that.

They have arrived at Tobias' office. Peter takes a deep breath.

PETER (cont'd)

Wish me luck.

He stops at the open door, hearing VOICES:

MAN'S VOICE #1

...here's our day and night numbers...
and the main line for the Bureau... call
if you get any information as to Mr.
Hartman's whereabouts...

Peter freezes... takes a quick peek in...

INT. TOBIAS' OFFICE - PETER'S QUICK POV

Two GOVERNMENT-LOOKING MEN are standing there, talking to a very grave Tobias.

TOBIAS

You gentlemen will be the first to hear from me.

INT. PETER'S OFFICE CORRIDOR - DAY

Peter whips back to Howie, ashen.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

You were right. Iron-Ass didn't call the cops. She called the FBI!

HOWIE

That would fall under the category of "out for blood."

Peter realizes his life has come crashing down.

PETER

Shit!

He starts to run back down the corridor. Howie grabs him.

HOWIE

Peter! If you find her... please... don't turn her in. I can't go the rest of my life without her, Peter--!

PETER

You're not serious!

HOWIE

I'm her love slave!

Disgusted and panicked, Peter flees.

INT. PETER'S OFFICE - PARKING GARAGE - DAY

He rushes to his car... opens the door and leaps in...

INT. PETER'S CAR

He starts the car... suddenly...

WIDOW,

(Chastity's nasty-looking ex) is in the back seat! From behind, Widow grabs Peter around the throat, pulls him back, fingers wrapped around Peter's throat.

WIDOW

Where's that bitch Chastity?

PETER

I... don't... know...! I have nothing to do... with her...!

WIDOW

BullSHIT! You a lawyer. I followed you, I know. Bitch didn't tell me about that...

(CONTINUED)

PETER

Why do you care if I'm a lawyer...

WIDOW

What'd you tell her?

He bashes Peter's head against the windshield.

PETER

Nothing! Look, I'm a tax attorney!!!

Widow pauses for a moment.

WIDOW

You not a criminal lawyer?!

PETER

No!!!

WIDOW

No investigatin'...?

PETER

NO!!! Why would anyone investigate a closed ca--

He suddenly realizes why. Because she's innocent. Widow snarls in his face:

WIDOW

Well, you keep it that way. Or I'll come back, mess you up good.

PETER

Got it.

Widow opens the door, starts to get out...

WIDOW

(thinking)

Or. Could just save myself the trip.

He starts to get back in...! Peter floors it in reverse! Widow goes flying off the car! Peter takes off, the back door of his car still wide open...!

INT. PETER'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Peter races in, dishevelled, facing his astonished kids.

PETER

We have to find Chastity.

(CONTINUED)

SARAH
I thought you hated Chastity.

PETER
I just found out she's innocent.

GEORGEY
I knew it!

PETER
I'm sorry, you guys. I blew it. But
what else is new, huh?

GEORGEY
You don't blow everything.

PETER
I don't?

SARAH
Well, usually. But you didn't blow this
one. Yet.

PETER)
I don't know where she is! I should have
trusted her.

SARAH
(realizing)
Not really.

PETER
Why not!

SARAH
Remember when she wanted to give you that
hug...? She put her hand in your pocket
and... I think she took your phone.

PETER
(indignant)
My new phone?! That was six hundred
dollars, titanium steel so she couldn't
smash it again -- and then she steals
it--?! That little!

SARAH
Dad. You can call her.

PETER
(beat)
Right.

EXT. THE FIRST STREET BRIDGE - DUSK

Chastity forlornly wanders across the bridge, shopping cart derelicts to the right and left of her. She has no money and nowhere to go. The phone rings the first few bars of an aria from La Traviata -- obviously Peter's phone. She clicks it on.

CHASTITY
("white" voice)
Metropolitan Museum of Art, how can I
help you?

INT. PHONE BOOTH - DUSK

PETER
I know who set you up.

INT. A CRUMMY BOYLE HEIGHTS CAFE - NIGHT

People covered with newspapers are sleeping in front of it. Through the window, we see Peter and Chastity sitting at a table, drinking coffee.

PETER
I... um... owe you an apology. I didn't
believe you were innocent.

CHASTITY
Thas alright. And, uh, sorry 'bout your
job... an' you bein' a fugitive now...
and uh... oh... your phone.

She sheepishly hands him back his cell phone.

PETER
Keep it.

CHASTITY
Hey, I ain't keepin' some thang that
plays La-The-Shit-Traviata--

PETER
(smiling)
And she recognizes arias.

CHASTITY
(pleased at the compliment, but
gruff)
Don't tell nobody.
(sighs, looks at him)
I knew Widow was bad. I jus didn't know
how bad. How you think he set me up?

(CONTINUED)

PETER

I don't know. I need to talk to him.

CHASTITY

Now, don't you be doin' that! Fool!
He'll feed you to his dogs! 'Sides,
don't we got enough evidence for a new
trial?

PETER

I'm not a defense attorney. The FBI
wants you... and once that machinery
starts in motion. you might never see the
hood again. Where's Widow now?

CHASTITY

Oh, probly at the Hoopty. Club he hangs
at. But--

Peter gets up.

PETER

We need a confession.

CHASTITY

You can't go there. --Hey, now, I mean
it -- they kill you, cotton ball! You
the wrong color to be walkin' out alive--

Peter is already at the door.

CHASTITY (CONT'D)

Now you listen to me -- you don' know how
to talk to those people!

PETER

Talking? I believe that's what I do best.

CHASTITY

Yeah, to some old leather-ass board of
directors, not to--

PETER

You don't think I can talk your language?

CHASTITY

Uh-uh. I talk yours, you can't talk
mine..

PETER

Excuse me? I've learned nothing? I
don't know "what it is?"

(CONTINUED)

CHASTITY

I know what it is, ain't, and it ain't a way you can talk, puff paste!

PETER

We'll see about that!

He starts out.

CHASTITY

Oh no! No no no--!

She grabs his arm. He looks in her eyes.

PETER

Who else is going to help you right now?

EXT. BOYLE HEIGHTS CAFE - NIGHT

Chastity rushes out after him, only to see his car squeal from the curb. He's gone. She sighs.

INT. MRS. ARNESS' LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE ON Mrs. Arness' withered hand as she brings a silver flask to her lips. She's had a rough couple of days. She sighs with satisfaction, puts the flask back in its hiding place behind the bookcase...

CHASTITY (O.S.)

So you do imbibe.

Mrs. Arness jumps out of her skin. She wheels around, shocked.

CHASTITY (cont'd)

You imbibe yo' ass off!

MRS. ARNESS

(calling frantically)

Julia!!

She rushes out, looks in--

INT. MRS. ARNESS' KITCHEN

--where her maid, JULIA, is tied up with curtain sashes, struggling, a dish towel in her mouth.

INT. MRS. ARNESS' LIVING ROOM

CHASTITY

I gave her the night off.

Mrs. Arness rushes to the wall, her hand going for the security console....!

CHASTITY (cont'd)

I would not do that if I was you.

MRS. ARNESS

Why not? You will be instantly returned to prison, where you belong!

CHASTITY

Okay. I'm gonna try to appeal to yo' better nature... not sure you got one... but I'm gonna try. Because Peter's always on my ass--

(correcting)

--always axing me to speak a little more uptown. So. You wrong about Peter. He's a good man. He's exactly the kind of lawyer you want in your corner. If you want to see the shi--

(correcting)

--lengths he goes to to help a client... then you gotta come with me.

MRS. ARNESS

I don't "got" to do anything.

She reaches for the alarm again.

CHASTITY

Let me put this another way. If you ever wanna see that blimpie-butt little dog of yours again--

MRS. ARNESS

(horrified)

You've got Muffy?!

EXT. PETER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Kate comes up the walkway, completely confused.

ALL THE LIGHTS IN THE HOUSE are on. TWO VANS are in Peter's driveway. The front door is wide open.

INT. PETER'S FOYER - DAY

Kate rushes in, concerned. Sarah and Peter rush into her arms.

KATE
What's going on?!!

GEORGEY
It's just the FBI, Mom.

SARAH
They're doing a little search.

From what Kate can see into the various rooms, FBI MEN are tearing through everything, searching in sofa cushions, opening drawers...

KATE
For what?!

SARAH
Well, for Chastity, but she's not--

KATE
The FBI is after your nanny?!

The kids shrug. Well, yeah.

SARAH
But she didn't--

Georgey is following one of the FBI men.

GEORGEY
Do you have a gun? Did you ever kill anybody?

KATE
Where's your father?!!!

EXT. THE HOOPTY - NIGHT

A scuzzy, loud, throbbing scene for locals.

A KNIFE FIGHT is starting outside it... two LOWLIFES circling each other with switchblades....

INT. PETER'S CAR - NIGHT

We see that we are in Peter's POV. He is understandably rather apprehensive.

(CONTINUED)

Sighing, he finishes strapping a PORTABLE TAPE RECORDER to his chest. Looks down at it. Mutters to himself.

PETER

What am I doing? They always find these things in the movies...

He sighs. Doesn't really have much choice. He reaches across the seat for his NEW SHIRT... puts it on... takes a deep breath and reluctantly opens the car door.

EXT. THE HOOPTY - NIGHT

Peter approaches the club. He is now wearing a Raiders football jersey, baggy pants, and has a gold chain around his neck. He carries a BOOM BOX.

Approaching the door, he turns the boom box on. Hip hop blares. HE breathes deeply, then STRUTS a stilted, exaggerated strut.

The BLACK DOORMAN watches as Peter grooves his way towards him. Tunes jamming.

DOORMAN

Cracker, yo' ass must be lost.

PETER

My Man, what it is, what it was, what it ain't never been! HA!

Peter grabs the Doorman's hand, fumbles through an awkward handshake. The Doorman pulls his hand away.

DOORMAN

For you, two hundred dolla' cover.

PETER

Benny Franklin, big balla in his day.
Got his face on the paper, got the dead
president thang goin' on.

Peter slides the Doorman a couple hundreds. The Doorman opens the door. Casts a murderous glance as Peter enters.

INT. THE HOOPTY - NIGHT

A happening club. The crowd is urban, hip, and not a little scary. The music is loud. And when Peter strolls in, everything STOPS.

Peter stands alone. He looks absurd. All eyes on him. Peter swallows hard.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

Yee-ah. Yee-ah. What's the kily yo?
Who's yo Daddy? Back that booty up,
put'em on the glass. Anybody here dig
what I'm sayin'?

Nobody digs what he's saying.

INT. HOWIE'S CAR - NIGHT

Howie is driving, Chastity is in the passenger seat. A
blisteringly angry Mrs. Arness is in the back.

HOWIE

Chastity, I was suprised to get your
call, what exactly are we--?

CHASTITY

Jus' drive.

He flicks a glance back at the furious Mrs. Arness.

HOWIE

The question "what's going on" definitely
comes to mind.

CHASTITY

The less you know, the less's gonna blow.

MRS. ARNESS

You'll get the chair for this!

HOWIE

I really get the feeling she doesn't want
to be here.

CHASTITY

(smiling at him)

Hey, sugah, you wanted to be wit' me?
Now we goin' to a real club.

MRS. ARNESS

Convict whore!

CHASTITY

Prune-ass bitch!

HOWIE

This is not, actually, how I envisioned
our dream date...

INT. THE HOOPTY - NIGHT

Peter saunters (or what he hopes is sauntering) in... approaches a GIGANTIC, STERN-LOOKING BLACK MAN at the bar...

PETER

Hey, homeboy, I'm tryin' to peep a friend. Where Tyrese at?

A stony stare.

PETER (cont'd)

I say, "Where Tyrese at?!"

A couple of other LARGE BLACK MEN move in behind the first man, lasers boring out of their eyes.

PETER (cont'd)

'Widow' to his friends...?

BLACK MAN #1

You ain't no friend o' Widow.

PETER

Only known him all my fool life.

BLACK MAN #1

Yeah? Where you from?

PETER

From the hood and misunderstood.

BLACK MAN #2

'F that was true...? You wouldnt'na growed up. 'Cause we'd'a smoked yo' baby ass when you was two!

Laughter.

PETER

'An Widow tried! Damn, how he try! We shoot at each other all our damn lives! Four, five years old -- bullets in my ass, bullets in his laig, finally second grade, we go, "Shit, man, we ain't nevah gonna kill each other! It's GREAT to HATE but we got another FATE, I cain't make you END, so you gotta be my FRIEND...

BLACK MAN #2

So you hang wit' Widow?

(CONTINUED)

PETER

Hang! We tight, we GLUED, we bruthas --
he here?

BLACK MAN #2

Then why we never see you down here?

PETER

'Cause I got my own club! 'S'right --
called the Joint, counta where the
clientele vacations, you know what I'm
sayin'?

AN IMMENSELY FAT BLACK WOMAN presses up against Peter.

FAT BLACK WOMAN

Lessee what you got, snowman.

PETER

(dreading)

Prob'ly not as much as you got--

She pulls him out to the dance floor. The black men watch,
amused.

PETER (cont'd)

No, I got bidness--

BLACK MAN #1

Oh, you so at home here an' all? Then
you dance wit' the woman.

BLACK MAN #2

Yeah. You go get a groove on.

Peter has no choice. He unstraps the boom box. The woman
cranks it up. The fat woman wiggles it, utterly raw and
sexy. Peter breaks into the best version he can of the
ROBOT.

An amused crowd starts to gather.

For the first time in this movie, Peter starts to get down.
He and the fat woman bump, grind, shake... and this is the
sight that greets...

WIDOW

as he emerges from the back room. He is quite surprised to
see--

PETER

shaking his booty with the locals.

WIDOW's

surprise turns to simmering rage.

PETER

in the middle of his coolest move, suddenly finds himself being LIFTED UP BY THE ARMPITS AND DRAGGED OFF by TWO IMMENSE BODYGUARDS... he barely manages to grab his boom box...

INT. KATE'S CAR - DRIVING - NIGHT

Kate drives, Sarah next to her, Georgey in the back. Kate is still trying to fathom all this awfulness.

KATE

So exactly why is he down at the drive-by headquarters of L.A.?!

GEORGEY

He's doing it for Chastity.

KATE

Oh. For his jailbird girl friend. I see.

SARAH

I told you, she's not his girl friend.

KATE

Oh no? Then why is she so important that he'd risk his life for her?

SARAH

Because they're friends.

KATE

Peter doesn't have friends, he doesn't have time--

GEORGEY

He made time.

Kate stares at her son.

SARAH

Mom, I know this sounds weird, but these days...? Dad actually doesn't blow.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

108

SARAH (cont'd)

And. I don't think he's with Chastity.
I think he still loves you.

This floors Kate.

KATE

Really? Are you sure?

SARAH

No.

Kate is exasperated. Makes a decision.

KATE

All right! I want to talk to him. Where
is this place?

SARAH

South Central.

Kate swings the car around.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I hope you get back together before they
kill him.

EXT. THE HOOPTY - THE BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Peter is sitting in the corner, the door blocked by Widow's
henchmen. Widow takes him in.

WIDOW

Damn, boy, you lookin' all kind'a stupid.

PETER

Really? 'Cause I borrowed this outfit
from yo' Momma.

The bodyguards suppress a giggle, which Widow doesn't
appreciate.

WIDOW

And stop that wigger shit or your body be
in the bay so long you turn black!

Peter drops the act.

PETER

Fine. I'm here to talk business.
Private business.

WIDOW

(to the bodyguards)
Kill him.

(CONTINUED)

The bodyguards advance on Peter.

PETER
Money business.

Widow hesitates.

INT. THE HOOPTY - NIGHT

Chastity, Howie and Mrs. Arness enter. The place is thick with (what we presume is) cigarette smoke and raw, sexual dancing. Mrs. Arness quakes with horror.

HOWIE
I don't see him.

CHASTITY
We gotta look.

They push through the crowd, who eyes Howie with hostility.

HOWIE
They seem to be unhappy with my pallor.

CHASTITY
Welcome to my world, baby.

HOWIE
And what do we do with her?

He gestures at Mrs. Arness. Chastity grabs Mrs. A. around the waist, PICKS HER UP, and places her on a bar stool, plopping her down between two of the HUGE BLACK MEN that we earlier saw hassling Peter. Chastity signals the bartender.

CHASTITY
Bacardi. Straight. Double.
(to Mrs. Arness)
Now you jus' sit here and don' move. And Muffy or Pussy or Bush, or whatever his little fat-ass name is, will live to see another day.

The drink comes. Mrs. Arness eyes it.

CHASTITY (cont'd)
You know you want it.

Mrs. Arness does. Oh, what the hell. Terrified, Mrs. A. downs it in one gulp.

INT. THE HOOPTY - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Widow regards Peter with amusement.

WIDOW

You either the dumbest--

PETER

Hold that thought.- I love this song.

Peter cranks up his boom box. He raps along to Tupac;

PETER (cont'd)

How many Brothas fell victim to tha
streets rest in peace there's a Heaven--

WIDOW

Turn that shit off!

Peter quickly HITS A BUTTON. The music stops.

WIDOW (cont'd)

You got three seconds to tell me why
you're here.

Widow pulls a gun from his waistband.

PETER

Now look. I have a feeling you're still
sitting on a gargantuan sum of cash --

WIDOW

Gar--?

PETER

(slowly, as if addressing a
retarded person)

Lots. Of. Money If you want to move it,
you need a lawyer.

WIDOW

I don't need a lawyer!

PETER

All crooks need lawyers. Half the crooks
are lawyers.

WIDOW

(intrigued)

One of 'em bein' you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PETER

I can hide your money in an untracable account in the Cayman Islands. All you do is pay me a hundred thousand. We both walk out of here wealthier men and I tell you where Chastity is. That simple.

Widow chuckles unpleasantly.

WIDOW

You're wearin' a wire.

PETER

Not me. Are you?

WIDOW

Then take off your clothes.

PETER

Hey. You're not my type--

The gun comes up into Peter's face. Widow STRIKES PETER with the gun's butt! Peter cries out in pain!

INT. THE HOOPTY - NIGHT

Chastity and Howie hear Peter's cry! They spin around, eye the TWO BODYGUARDS guarding the door to the back room.

CHASTITY

He's in there!

HOWIE

Wait-- what'll he do to you if you go in?

CHASTITY

Nothin' good.

She whips out Peter's phone, dials.

HOWIE

What are you doing?

CHASTITY

Callin' the cavalry.

HOWIE

You'll go back to prison.

Chastity ignores this.

(CONTINUED)

CHASTITY

(into phone)

...yes I'd like the number for the
Federal Bureau of Investigation....

HOWIE

How do you feel about conjugal visits?

INT. THE HOOPTY - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Peter, gun to his head, is being forced to strip off his
shirt. And then we see...

No wire!

We now realize -- he must have thought the better of it
before he got out of the car.

WIDOW

Okay. Maybe you got a real proposition.
But I think one thing I can do without no
help, is spend the cash.

He brings up the gun to Peter's head.

PETER

Hold on! Chastity's ready to roll over
on you! She knows who your accomplice
was!

WIDOW

Oh, she do? That'd be a little tough.

PETER

Why?

WIDOW

Because there was no accomplice.

PETER

There was a girl in those photos...

WIDOW

(amused)

Oh yeah. Thas' right. Somebody in a
dress an' wig, some bank-robbing ghetto-
ho...

PETER

It was you, wasn't it?

WIDOW

I was one ugly-ass girl!

(CONTINUED)

PETER

You set her up. You left her clothes,
the money and the gun...

WIDOW

Hey, I was sick of the bitch. They don't
hassle you when they locked up!
(grabs Peter by the hair)
Come on--!

Peter is confused.

WIDOW (CONT'D)

You know where the bitch is. You gonna
tell me now!

He SLAPS PETER!

INT. THE HOOPTY - NIGHT

Mrs. Arness sits at the bar, coughing, clouds of smoke in her
face. Hostile stares from the black men on either side of
her. Three empty shot glasses in front of her. She may be
terrified, but at least she's soused. She feels the guy
eying at her.

MRS. ARNESS

Oh, what are you looking at?!

She signals the bartender.

BLACK WOMAN #1

You go, Grandma!

Laughter around Mrs. Arness.

CHASTITY AND HOWIE

She eyes the door to the back room, nervous.

CHASTITY

One time I call the heat and they don't
come! Can't wait no more!

She starts for the door.

HOWIE

No! You're not--

But she's already pushing her way towards the door approaching
the bodyguards.

(CONTINUED)

CHASTITY

Open up. Widow wants to see me.

BODYGUARD #1

Says who?

CHASTITY

Says Chastity.

The door opens. It's Widow and Peter, who has a bruised face.

WIDOW

Well. This is what you call a psychic moment. I was just lookin' for you!

CHASTITY

(re Peter)

He's just some fool. Let him go.

WIDOW

Sure, sweet thang.

He releases Peter... and, in the blink of an eye, he brings the gun up level with Chastity! Patrons dive to the floor! WHAM! Peter throws an elbow into Widow's gut. Widow doubles over, drops the gun.

Peter goes for the gun but Widow's bodyguards grab him. Howie, the nearest person to the gun, is forced to pick it up. He holds it upside-down, a person who has clearly never held a firearm in his life.

PETER

Aim it, Howie!

HOWIE

Right.

He turns the gun around, facing the baddies. They take a step back. Chastity glares at Widow.

WIDOW

How was prison?

In the distance, we hear SIRENS.

CHASTITY

You about to find out.

HOWIE

(low, to Peter)

Do you think the safety's on?

(CONTINUED)

PETER
How would I know?

HOWIE
Is it this thing--?!

PETER
No--!

THE GUN GOES OFF, SHATTERING THE MIRROR BEHIND THE BAR.
Bottles explode. Glass and booze rain down on Mrs. Arness.
Loaded, she calmly takes another sip.

The baddies take advantage of Howie's disorientation to grab him, the gun, and Peter.

Chastity LANDS A SOLID RIGHT on Widow, starts to beat the shit out of him. She's getting the better of the fight, has him down... is about to bring a chair down on his head... but...

One of the baddies TOSSES WIDOW THE GUN. Chastity realizes her number is up.

CHASTITY
Okay. Give you a chance. I stop if you will.

Widow smiles, BLASTS CHASTITY IN THE CHEST!

She staggers backwards... falls! Peter and Howie rush to her...

THE TWO FBI AGENTS

rush in the door, guns drawn...

Widow's bodyguards slip out the back. Widow tries to do the same, but Howie, with a feral scream, RUSHES WIDOW, TACKLING HIM! He pounds Widow's head on the floor.

HOWIE
You killed my goddess!!

Then... horrified, on his knees besides Chastity, Peter notices...

CHASTITY'S

eyelids flutter. She opens her eyes. Peter gasps.

(CONTINUED)

CHASTITY

(stunned)

Huhhhhh.

Peter stares at the hole in her shirt.

PETER

Chas...!

Groggy, she reaches up to her shirt pocket... removes PETER'S TITANIUM CELL PHONE... which now has a tiny dent.

Peter grins with delight. Then, not wanting to be too maudlin:

PETER (cont'd)

That better still work.

She grins back at him. The first FBI man approaches Peter.

FBI MAN #1

You Hartman?

Peter nods. The agent immediately move in -- to cuff him! The second agent starts cuffing Chastity!

PETER

Wait, wait! She's innocent.

FBI MAN #1

Save it.

He finishes cuffing them, brusquely hauling them to their feet.

PETER

There's a boom box in the bathroom.
Everything you need is on the tape.

Mrs. Arness stares at him. Then her face goes down on the bar. Wham!

EXT. THE HOOPTY - NIGHT

The FBI exit, dragging a struggling WIDOW.

Howie exits, holding up a rather drunk Mrs. Arness. Peter and Chastity exit behind them. He turns to her.

PETER

What did you do to Iron-Ass?!

(CONTINUED)

CHASTITY

Nothin.' She got a little tense in there, got a little drunk.

Peter notices that Mrs. Arness is staring up, slackjawed, at the full moon.

MRS. ARNESS

Wow!

PETER

That's not just drunk.

CHASTITY

What you think she was breathin' in there, cigarette smoke?!

MRS. ARNESS

(pulling herself together,
stern)

Mr. Hartman...!

Peter takes a deep breath, approaches her.

MRS. ARNESS (cont'd)

You are in the most dire imaginable...

She breaks off into uncontrollable giggles!

MRS. ARNESS (cont'd)

Oh my!!! Okay, wait. I can do this...

(tries to be stern again)

You kidnapped me! I'll have you disbarr...!

More giggles. The funniest thing ever. She just can't take herself seriously.

MRS. ARNESS (cont'd)

Oh, screw it.

(trying to sober up)

Listen, just don't mention... you saw me like this...?

Peter smiles.

PETER

I think you wear it rather well.

She smiles at him. Howie pops the trunk of her car, takes out her little dog and puts it into her arms.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. ARNESS

My God, this dog is obese!!!

Peter turns and looks at Chastity. They smile at each other. He walks up to her... puts his arms around her... and they hug... just as...

KATE'S CAR --

picks this moment to pull up... Kate stares at Peter and Chastity's tight hug... !

...and does a 180!

Peter looks up just in time to see--

PETER

Kate--!

But her car is disappearing out of sight.

INT. PETER'S OFFICE CORRIDOR - DAY

Tobias and Gendler are walking down the hall. Gendler is in deep shit with Tobias...

TOBIAS

Well, that's not good enough! You'll just have to keep trying, won't you?

GENDLER

I've called Arness four times, Ed... She'll only talk to Peter!

TOBIAS

(annoyed)

Well, then, we'll just have to keep him around, won't we?

They stop, staring into--

INT. PETER'S OFFICE - DAY

Peter, Chastity, Howie, Sarah, Georgey are all packing up Peter's belongings in boxes.

PETER

Hi, Ed. Oh. Did I mention? I'm going out on my own?

TOBIAS

You don't have the resources.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

I have one two hundred and fifty million
dollar client... that's a start... and...
(eying Howie)
...and accountant... and...
(eying Chastity)
...a paralegal.

Chastity stares at him, touched. Peter starts out the door
with his entourage, all carrying boxes of his stuff.

PETER (CONT'D)

Goodbye, Ed. And do yourself a favor.
Come clean.

CHASTITY

Sing loud: "I'm black and I'm proud!"

TOBIAS

(staggered)
Who told you?!

Gendler won't meet Tobias' eyes.

EXT. PETER'S OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Peter and his kids walk to the curb, Howie and Chastity
behind them.

CHASTITY

"Paralegal..." Thass nice an' all, but
that means school. You think I'm gonna
sit in some boring-ass lecture hall,
listenin' to some professor yak yak--?!

HOWIE

You'll do it, woman, and no balktalk, or
I'll slap yo' shit around!

Chastity stares at him.

CHASTITY

What did you just say to me?!

HOWIE

You love it.

A tiny smile curls the corner of her lips. Maybe she does.

Peter stops, struck...

(CONTINUED)

There, standing in front of his car, is KATE. Smiling at him.

Peter drops the box on the ground... approaches her...

KATE

Any man desperate enough to romance a
hunk of iron while thinking of me...

Peter shoots Chastity a look. Chastity shrugs, smiles.
Peter turns back to Kate.

PETER

...should be locked up?

KATE

No.

PETER

Pitied?

KATE

(smiles)

No.

PETER

Should... get another chance...?

Kate smiles, walks into his arms.

KATE

Two steps to the car. Four tickets to
Hawaii. Can he do it?

Her eyes search his. Peter takes his PHONE out of his
jacket, THROWS IT AS HARD AS HE CAN... it FLIES UP INTO THE
SKY... we follow the phone up... as it turns into...

AN AIRPLANE...

streaking off... above the clouds... taking the Hartman
family into their new life.